

# Turkish History and Culture in India

*Identity, Art and Transregional Connections*

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*Edited by*

A.C.S. Peacock and Richard Piran McClary



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## Turkish History and Culture in India

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# Contents

Acknowledgements	VII
List of Figures	VIII
A Note on Transliteration and Dates	XII
Notes on Contributors	XIII

Introduction	1
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*A.C.S. Peacock and Richard Piran McClary*

## PART I

### *Turkish Origins, Identity and History in India*

- 1 Warfare and Environment in Medieval Eurasia: Turkic Frontiers at Dandanqan, Somnath and Manzikert 25  
*George Malagaris*
- 2 Turks, Turks and türk Turks: Anatolia, Iran and India in Comparative Perspective 56  
*Stephen Frederic Dale*
- 3 The “Advent of the Turks” and the Question of Turkish Identity in the Court of Delhi in the Early Thirteenth Century 88  
*Blain Auer*
- 4 Merchants, Young Heroes and Caliphs: Revisiting Maḥmūd Gāwān 104  
*Maya Petrovich*
- 5 The Trouble with Lineage: On Why the Timurid Prince Muḥammad Zamān Mīrzā Did Not Become Emperor 129  
*Ali Anooshahr*
- 6 Remembering Turkish Origins in the Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-century Deccan: The Qaraqoyunlu Past in the Persian Chronicles of the Qutbshahi Dynasty 152  
*A.C.S. Peacock*

**PART 2*****Art, Material Culture, Literature and Transregional Connections***

- 7 Transregional Connections: The “Lion and Sun” Motif and Coinage between Anatolia and India 203  
*Shailendra Bhandare*
- 8 When Brick Met Stone: Turko-Iranian Brick Architecture and its Interaction with the Lithic Traditions of India and Anatolia 248  
*Richard Piran McClary*
- 9 The Jami Masjid *Miḥrāb* of Bijapur: Inscribing Turkic Identities in a Contested Space 271  
*Sara Mondini*
- 10 “Made in Istanbul, Delhi or Agra”: Serving Imperial and Princely Courts in the Ottoman and Mughal Worlds 299  
*Suraiya Faroqhi*
- 11 Mapping the Boundaries of the World: India and the Indian Ocean in the Early Modern Ottoman Geographical Imagination 338  
*Pınar Emiralioğlu*
- 12 Turki Language and Literature in Late Mughal India as Reflected in a Unique Collection of Texts 367  
*Benedek Péri*
- Index 389

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Most of the chapters in the present volume derive from discussions held at a workshop entitled “Rum and Hind: relations and shared experiences of conquest, acculturation and Turkish rule in pre-modern India and Anatolia” held on 25-26 May 2017, and organised by the Centre for Anatolian and East Mediterranean Studies at the University of St Andrews. We are grateful to Dr Paul Churchill for his assistance with organising the original workshop, and to the European Research Council for providing funding through the Grant no. 284076, “IslamAnatolia: The Islamisation of Anatolia, c. 1100-1500”. We are also indebted to the Department of Art History, University of York for providing a grant towards the costs of publication. In addition, we would like to record our thanks to Ian Macdonald for copyediting the volume, and Marc Czarnuszewicz for its index.



# Figures

- 0.1 India and western Asia 2
- 5.1 Map of localities in North India and Iran associated with Prince Mirzā Zamān's career 131
- 6.1 *Nasabnāma* of Fursī. Calcutta, Asiatic Society of Bengal, MS PSC 690, fols. 1b-2a, Exordium 161
- 6.2 *Nasabnāma* of Fursī. Los Angeles County Museum of Art, MS 89.159.4. Praise of Sultan Muḥammad-Qulī with a later illustration of Sultan ‘Abdallāh (r. 1627-72) 163
- 6.3 *Kanz al-Lughat*. Salar Jung Museum Library Hyderabad, MS Persian Lug. 113. Note showing Sulṭān-Muḥammad's genealogy 191
- 6.4 *Maṣnavīs* of Jamālī. Salar Jung Museum Library, Hyderabad, MS Persian Tasawwuf 158. Note in Sulṭān-Muḥammad's hand underlining the poet's Qaraqoyunlu connection 192
- 6.5 ‘Abd Ja‘far Ja‘farī Tabrīzī, *Zā‘icha-i Tāli‘*. Salar Jung Museum Library, Hyderabad, MS Persian U-S 28. Frontispiece illustrating the Aqqoyunlu sultan Ya‘qūb (right) and the astrologer (left) 193
- 7.1 100-toman banknote of the Imperial Bank of Persia, with the “Lion and Sun” vignette, 1896 209
- 7.2 Gold 20-abbasi coin of Āghā Muḥammad Khān Qājār, struck at Tehran, AH 1210 (Ashmolean Museum, HCR7414) 210
- 7.3 Safavid, temp. Ḥusayn I (r. 1694-1722), prestige civic copper bronze *fulus* (37mm, 17.44g), Isfahan mint, AH 1117 (Heritage World Coin Auctions, New York Signature Sale 302, Auction date: 6 January 2013, Lot number: 21764) 210
- 7.4 Jahāngīr (r. 1605-27), gold presentation Mohur with “Lion and Sun” on reverse, lion facing left (British Museum, AH1020/RV6; photograph by author) 212
- 7.5 Jahāngīr (r. 1605-27), gold presentation Mohur with “Lion and Sun” on reverse, lion facing right (British Museum, AH1020/RV6; photograph by author) 213
- 7.6 Jahāngīr (1605-1627), gold presentation Mohur with a seated portrait and “Lion and Sun”, Ajmer mint (British Museum, AH1023/RV8; photograph by author) 213
- 7.7 *Jahāngīr receiving Prince Khurram back from a victorious campaign in Mewar* by the artist Balchand (*Pādshāhnāma*, Royal Collection, Windsor, accession number RCIN 1005025.f) 216
- 7.8 Detail of Fig 7.7, showing footman carrying the banner 217
- 7.9 *The Mughal siege of Qandahar*, by the artist Payag (*Pādshāhnāma*, Royal Collection, Windsor, accession number RCIN 1005025.s) 218
- 7.10 Detail of Fig 7.9, showing soldiers carrying pennants 219

- 7.11 *An imperial procession* (in part), by the “Kashmiri Painter” (*Pādshāhnāma*, Royal Collection, Windsor, accession number RCIN 1005025.ai) 220
- 7.12 Detail of Fig 7.11, showing footmen carrying embroidered banners 221
- 7.13 William Baffin’s early map of India (British Library, acc. no. Maps K.Top.115.22, “William Baffin’s map of the Mughal Empire,” London: Thomas Sterne, 1619) 222
- 7.14 Aqqoyunlu, bronze *fals* of Nūr al-Dīn Ḥamza b. Qarā Yülük ‘Uthmān (r. 1438-44), (2.2g) (Stephen Album Rare Coins, Auction 27, Auction date: 19 January 2017, Lot number: 786) 223
- 7.15 Aqqoyunlu, anonymous bronze *fals* (2.72g), Mardin mint (Stephen Album Rare Coins, Auction 14, Auction date: 21 September 2012, Lot number: 755) 224
- 7.16 Golden Horde, Jānī Beg, AH 743-58/AD 1342-57, billon Pul (25mm, 6.93g), Khwarazm mint (Classical Numismatic Group, Electronic Auction 198, Auction date: 5 November 2008, Lot number: 349) 224
- 7.17 Ilkhanids, Abū Sa’īd Bahādūr, AH 716-36/AD 1316-35, bronze *fals* (18mm, 1.56g), Mardin mint (Classical Numismatic Group, Electronic Auction 323, Auction date: 26 March 2014, Lot number: 638) 225
- 7.18 Ilkhanids, Arghūn, AH 683-90/AD 1284-91, silver dirham (2.51g), Tus mint (Gorny & Mosch Giessener Münzhandlung, Auction 161, Auction date: 11 October 2007, Lot number: 5781) 225
- 7.19 Artuqids of Mardin, al-Şāliḥ Şāliḥ I, AH 712-65/AD 1312-64. Bronze double *fals* (27mm, 5.94g), Mardin mint (Classical Numismatic Group, Auction 109, Auction date: 12 September 2018, Lot number: 796) 226
- 7.20 Artuqids of Mardin, al-Şāliḥ Şāliḥ I, AH 712-65/AD 1312-64, *fals* (1.69g), no mint (Wilkes & Curtis Ltd, Auction 11, Auction date: 13 June 2016, Lot number: 130) 227
- 7.21 Seljuqs of Rum, gold dinar of Ghiyāş al-Dīn Kaykhusraw II (r. 1237-46) (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 99.35.2379) 228
- 7.22 Seljuqs of Rum, gold dinar of Ghiyāş al-Dīn Kaykhusraw II (r. 1237-46), (4.48g) (American Numismatic Society, 1962.126.2) 228
- 7.23 Seljuqs of Rum, silver dirham of Ghiyāş al-Dīn Kaykhusraw II (r. 1237-46), Konya mint 229
- 7.24 Seljuqs of Rum, silver dirham of Ghiyāş al-Dīn Kaykhusraw II (r. 1237-46), Sivas mint 229
- 7.25 Silver dirham of Nāşir al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Ḥasan Qarlugh (r. 1249-59), (2.55g) (Stephen Album Rare Coins, Auction 17, Auction date: 19 September 2013, Lot number: 546) 231
- 7.26 Billon *jital* of Nāşir al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Ḥasan Qarlugh (r. 1249-59), (3.48g), Ghazna mint 234

- 7.27 Billon *jital* of Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Ḥasan Qarlugh (r. 1249-59), (3.52g), Kuraman mint 234
- 7.28 Bengal, gold *tanka* in the name of Mu‘izz al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Sām, struck by Muḥammad Bakhtiyār Khaljī, AH 601/AD 1204, celebrating the conquest of Bengal as suggested by Devanagari legend below the “Horseman” (British Museum; photograph by author) 238
- 7.29 Bengal, temp. Muḥammad Bakhtiyār Khaljī (r. 1204-6), gold fractional *tanka* of 20 rati (17mm, 2.28g) in the name of Mu‘izz al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Sām, sultan of Delhi (Classical Numismatic Group, Auction 105, Auction date: 10 May 2017, Lot number: 1118) 239
- 7.30 Bengal, temp. Muḥammad Bakhtiyār Khaljī, (r. 1204-6), gold fractional *tanka* of 20 rati, in the name of Mu‘izz al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Sām, sultan of Delhi (J.P. Goenka collection, Kolkata/Mumbai, India; photograph by author) 239
- 7.31 Seljuqs of Rum, ‘Izz al-Dīn Qılıj Arslān II b. Mas‘ūd (r. 1155-92), bronze *fals* (20mm, 3.85g), “Horseman” type (Classical Numismatic Group, Electronic Auction 323, Auction date: 26 March 2014, Lot number: 549) 240
- 7.32 Bengal, silver *tanka* of Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish (r. 1210-35) (10.9g), “horseman archer” type (Private collection, Dubai; photograph by author) 242
- 7.33 Armenian/Seljuqs of Rum, silver tram/dirham in joint names of Het‘um/Kaykhusraw II, Sis mint, dated AH 637/AD 1239-40 (2.90g), (St. James’s Auctions Ltd, Auction 38, Auction date: 29 September 2016, Lot number: 161) 244
- 7.34 Seljuqs of Rum, Rukn al-Dīn Qılıj Arslān IV, first sole reign (r. 1248-9), silver dirham (23mm, 2.77g), Sivas mint (Classical Numismatic Group, Auction 85, Auction date: 15 September 2010, Lot number: 1321) 244
- 8.1 Twin minarets, Adhai din ka Jhompara mosque, Ajmer © Richard Piran McClary 256
- 8.2 *Tōraṇa* gates, Rudra-Mahalaya Shiva temple, Siddhpur © Richard Piran McClary 258
- 8.3 *Miḥrāb* of the Shahi mosque, Khatu (left), and the Adhai din ka Jhompara mosque, Ajmer (right) © Richard Piran McClary 259
- 8.4 *Miḥrāb* and minbar, Chaurasi Khamba mosque, Kaman © Richard Piran McClary 260
- 8.5 South secondary *miḥrāb* (left) and central *miḥrāb* (right), Ukha Mandir, Bayana © Richard Piran McClary 261
- 8.6 Interior and *miḥrāb*, Sultan Ghari tomb, Delhi © Richard Piran McClary 264
- 8.7 Eastern façade and portal, Sultan Ghari tomb, Delhi © Richard Piran McClary 265
- 9.1 Jami Masjid of ‘Alī I ‘Ādilshāh, Bijapur © Sara Mondini 279
- 9.2 Jami Masjid of Sultan Ibrāhīm I, Bijapur © British Library Board Photo 1003/ (1821) 280

- 9.3 Jami Masjid of ‘Alī I ‘Ādilshāh, Bijapur: prayer hall and *qibla* wall  
© Sara Mondini 282
- 9.4 Jami Masjid of ‘Alī I ‘Ādilshāh, Bijapur: *mihrāb* © Sara Mondini 284
- 9.5 Jami Masjid of ‘Alī I ‘Ādilshāh, Bijapur: detail of left side of *mihrāb*  
© Sara Mondini 286
- 9.6 Mecca Masjid *mihrāb*, Bijapur © Sara Mondini 288
- 9.7 Jami Masjid of ‘Alī I ‘Ādilshāh, Bijapur: spandrels above *mihrāb*  
© Sara Mondini 290
- 9.8 Jami Masjid of ‘Alī I ‘Ādilshāh, Bijapur: springing of arch of *mihrāb* with  
inscriptions © Sara Mondini 291
- 10.1 Banya Bashi mosque in Sofia, Bulgaria. Built in 1576 by Mimar Sinan (d. 1588),  
the chief architect of sultans Süleyman, Selim II and Murad III. Photograph by  
Suraiya Faroqhi 307
- 10.2 The seaside villa of Hatice Sultan, sister to Sultan Selim III (r. 1789-1807),  
designed and depicted by Antoine Ignace Melling (1763-1831) © Staatsbiblio-  
thek Berlin Libri impr. rari fol. 325 309
- 10.3 The mosque of Aurangzeb (r. 1658-1707) in Benares/Varanasi – depicted by  
James Prinsep in 1834, when the mosque still possessed the two minarets that  
are now lost © Universitätsbibliothek Heidelberg, *Benares Illustrated* (276 rei  
2002/236), p. 22 311
- 10.4 The mausoleum of ‘Abd al-Raḥīm khān-i khānān (1556-1627) in Delhi. Photo-  
graph by Richard McClary 313
- 10.5 Agra fort. Photograph by Suraiya Faroqhi 328
- 11.1 Map of the Indian Ocean. Walters Sea Atlas (c. 1560), Walters Art Museum,  
W. 660, 7b-8a 352
- 11.2 Map of India. Katip Çelebi, *Atlas Minor*. Süleymaniye Library, MS  
Nuruosmaniye 2998, 401a 355
- 11.3 Map of the Indian Ocean basin. Katib Çelebi, *Kitab-ı Cihannüma*  
(Qustantiniyya: Dar al-Ṭaba‘a al-Amire, 1145 [1732]), Süleymaniye Library,  
Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa 736, 96a 358
- 11.4 Map of Southeast Asia. Dimaşki, *The Triumph of Islam and Joy in the Writing of*  
*Atlas Maior*. MS Nuruosmaniye, 2996, 77b-78a 361
- 12.1 MS Perzsa O 87: Ownership stamp on the sixth front flyleaf, recto (courtesy of  
the Oriental Collection of the Library and Information Centre of the Hungarian  
Academy of Sciences) 373
- 12.2 MS Perzsa O 87: A page from a Turkish-Persian word list (fol. 201<sup>v</sup>) (courtesy of  
the Oriental Collection of the Library and Information Centre of the Hungarian  
Academy of Sciences) 378
- 12.3 MS Perzsa O 87: Scribe’s colophon at the end of Fuzūlī’s *Beng ü Bāde* (fol. 295<sup>v</sup>)  
(courtesy of the Oriental Collection of the Library and Information Centre of  
the Hungarian Academy of Sciences) 381

## A Note on Transliteration and Dates

A work dealing with sources in Arabic, Persian, Ottoman and Chaghatay Turkish must necessarily be subject to uneasy compromises in the matter of transliteration. The convention among Ottomanists to transliterate personal names according to the rules of modern Republican Turkish has been followed for names in an Ottoman context, although final voiced consonants are preserved (thus Ahmed not Ahmet or Aḥmed). Similarly, vowel length is not usually marked for Ottoman terms and names. However, among specialists in Chaghatay/Eastern Turkish as well as Timurid and Mughal history the preference seems to be to mark vowel length and diacritics on consonants, so names from an Eastern Turkish context are fully transliterated (thus, Ḥusayn Bāyqarā, not Hüseyin Baykara). However, names well known in a specific English form, such as Aurangzeb, are rendered thus. While at risk of some inconsistency, the aim has been to render names in a form that will be readily recognisable. Arabic and Persian are transliterated according to the system recommended by the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. For Sanskrit and other Indian languages, the preferences of individual authors have been maintained.

Dates are rendered in AD/CE form, except where a hijri date is specifically referred to in a source, where it is given first.

## Notes on Contributors

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# Introduction

*A.C.S. Peacock and Richard Piran McClary*

For most of the second millennium, India was dominated politically by dynasties of Turkish origin – the Ghaznavids, the Delhi sultans, the Mughals, and in the Deccan, the Bahmanis, Qutbshahis and Adilshahis, to name but a few.<sup>1</sup> They were supported by a Turkish military elite, comprised, at various times, of slave soldiers, émigré mercenaries from Anatolia and Central Asia, and steppe nomads. Yet detailed studies of Turks are strangely absent from the historiography of South Asia. Although a good number of books and articles allude in their titles to the “Turks” of India,<sup>2</sup> they generally reflect the usage of many Indian languages that employ “Turk” (or its Sanskrit form, *Turushka*) mainly as a synonym for Muslim.<sup>3</sup> Until recently, scholarship has widely assumed that any Turkish identity and language was lost with residence in India, and has depicted the Muslim ruling class as “Perso-Islamic”. A case in point are the Mughals (r. 1526-1857), who, despite their indisputable descent from the Central Asian conqueror Temür (d. 1405), and the well-attested use of Turkish at least among early generations of the dynasty, are much more usually considered either in isolation as a uniquely Indian phenomenon, or as a “Persianate dynasty”.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, even Turkish-language scholarship, usually voracious in its

- 1 Scholarly usage of the terms Turkish and Turkic is inconsistent, with the latter term sometimes being used to distinguish speakers of Turkic languages, especially from Central Asia, from those of the Republic of Turkey. Historically, however, such a distinction is not made in any Turkish or Turkic language, with both Ottoman and Chaghatay texts referring to their language as Turki, while Anatolian Turkish language and peoples also contained significant eastern elements, throwing the utility of such a distinction for historians into question. The usage “Turkic” was consistently rejected by the leading British Turkologist Sir Gerard Clauson, who preferred to use Turkish for all members of the language group and their speakers, an approach followed in this introduction. However, we have not enforced uniformity of usage of these two terms on contributors.
- 2 A case in point is the article by Eleanor Zelliott, “A Medieval Encounter Between Hindu and Muslim: Eknath’s Drama-Poem *Hindu-Turk Saṃvād*,” in Fred W. Clothe (ed.), *Images of Man: Religion and Historical Process in South Asia* (Madras: New Era Publications, 1982), 171-95, reprinted in Richard M. Eaton (ed.), *India’s Islamic Traditions, 711-1750* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003), 64-82; another example is the edited collection, David Gilmartin and Bruce B. Lawrence (eds), *Beyond Turk and Hindu: Rethinking Religious Identities in Islamic South Asia* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2000).
- 3 On *Turushka*, see Brajadulal Chattopadhyaya, *Representing the Other: Sanskrit Sources and the Muslims* (New Delhi: Manohar, 1998), 48-55.
- 4 For a critique, see Lisa Balabanlilar, *Imperial Identity in the Mughal Empire: Memory and Dynastic Politics in Early Modern South and Central Asia* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2011).

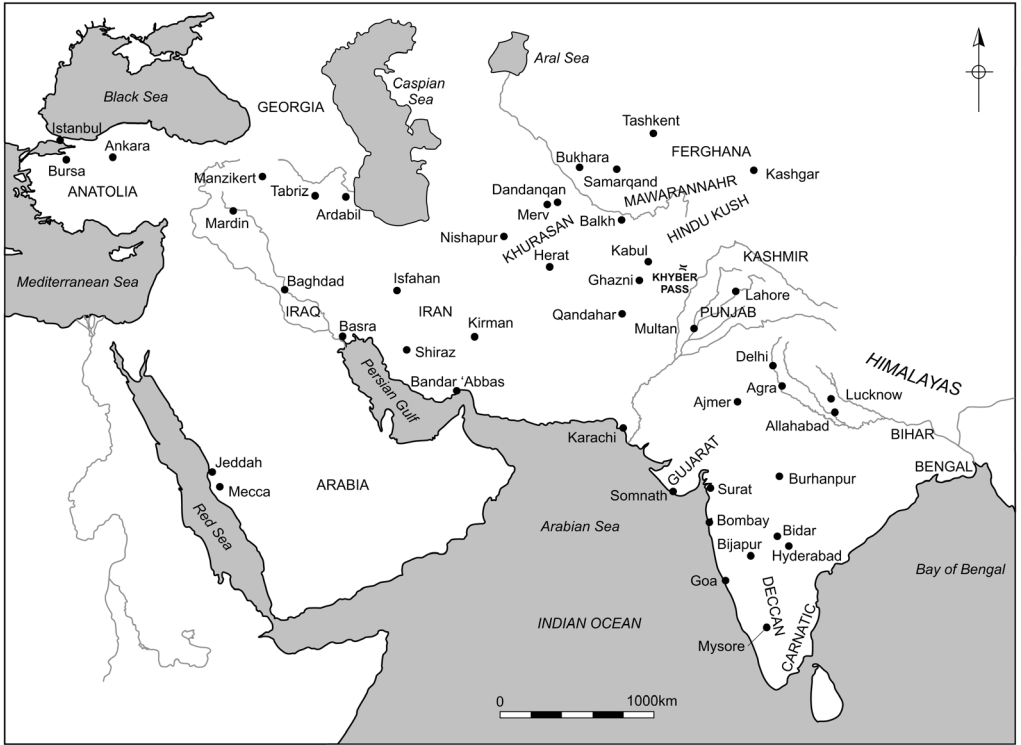


FIGURE 0.1 India and western Asia

appetite for detecting “Turkishness” in sometimes questionable places, has evinced relatively little interest in Turkish dynasties in India.<sup>5</sup>

Recent research, however, has pointed to the importance of the Turkish and Central Asian origins of these dynasties in an Indian context. The Mughals, for instance, propagated a memory of their Timurid ancestors (r. c. 1370-1507) which contributed to their efforts to establish the legitimacy of the dynasty,<sup>6</sup> and their enduring links with Central Asia have been stressed.<sup>7</sup> Even the Turkish language and literature was considerably more vital in the Mughal period

5 Among the few such examples are the conference proceedings *Tarihte Türk Hint İlişkileri Sempozyumu 31 Ekim – 1 Kasım 2002* (Ankara, Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2006) and a study of the Adilshahi dynasty: İsmail Hikmet Ertaylan, *Âdilşâhiler Hindistan’da bir Türk-İslam Devleti* (Istanbul: Sermet Matbaası, 1953).

6 Balabanlılar, *Imperial Identity in the Mughal Empire*.

7 Ibid.; Richard Foltz, *Mughal India and Central Asia* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2001); Stephen Dale, *The Garden of the Eight Paradises: Babur and the Culture of Empire in Central Asia, Afghanistan and India (1483-1530)* (Leiden: Brill, 2004).

than has been previously recognised.<sup>8</sup> This new scholarly interest is welcome, but many aspects of the Turkish experience of India, and the Indian experience of Turks, remain barely studied, especially for the Mughals' predecessors and their contemporaries in South India. This book fills a gap by bringing together studies of the historical role of Turks in India, but it differs from the few previous studies in one major respect. Here the focus is less on connections with Central Asia (although given their importance these are not ignored), but rather with the Turkish world to the west, Anatolia and the Ottoman empire, an aspect that has previously largely been neglected in scholarship beyond some studies of diplomatic relations between the Mughals and Ottomans.

Nonetheless, from the outset it must be recognised that such a conceptualisation of a "Turkish world" is far from unproblematic. If various dialects of Turkish were the first spoken language of rulers from Istanbul to Agra, what did this mean for their identity, especially given that in most cases, outside the Ottoman empire, Persian remained the major literary and administrative language? The Safavids, for instance, spoke Turkish but, despite their reliance on a Turkish military elite, were not themselves ethnically Turkish, and Persian remained the prime written language of their state. Pre-modern ethnic identities are not set in stone, and even the term Turk or Turkish itself is somewhat nebulous, for it could be used to refer to any steppe people, including non-Turkic-speaking ones such as Mongols.<sup>9</sup> On occasion, the Turkish origins ascribed to Indian Muslim rulers may have been invented or at least emphasised in order to anchor a given dynasty in the broader Turko-Islamic world and thus reinforce its legitimacy.<sup>10</sup> This world largely coheres with the cultural sphere known as Turko-Persia.<sup>11</sup> Stretching across India, Central Asia and Iran to Anatolia (or Rum as the latter region was known in the languages of the Islamic world), it represents a realm where if ruling elites were (or claimed to be) Turkish or Turkophone, the dominant culture was Persianate.

However, Indian rulers were not unique in seeking to associate themselves with specifically Turkish ancestors or antecedents. Even in distant Southeast Asia, Muslim rulers claimed Rumi descent and what has been described as a

8 Benedek Péri, "Turkish Language and Literature in Medieval and Early Modern India", in Ismail K. Poonawala (ed.), *Turks in the Indian Subcontinent, Central and West Asia* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2017), 227-62.

9 Joo-Yup Lee, "The Historical Meaning of the Term Turk and the Nature of the Turkic Identity of the Chinggisid and Timurid Elites in Post-Mongol Central Asia," *Central Asiatic Journal* 59/1-2 (2016), 101-32.

10 See the study by Ali Anooshahr, *Turkestan and the Rise of Eurasian Empires: A Study of Politics and Invented Traditions* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018).

11 For a discussion of this concept, see Robert L. Canfield, "Introduction, the Turko-Persian tradition," in Robert L. Canfield (ed.), *Turko-Persia in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 1-34.

‘Turkic-Turkish theme’ plays a prominent role in traditional Malay court literature.<sup>12</sup> On the other side of the Indian Ocean, on the east coast of Africa, local rulers claimed both Turkish origins as well as “Shirazi” ones – doubtless in both cases representing the invention of legitimacy origins, but also showing the pull of a broader Turko-Persian world even in areas that are more conventionally linked to the Arab Middle East.<sup>13</sup> Thus, both Rum and “Turkishness” (whether real or invented) had a certain prestige that has often been underrated in scholarship on “Turko-Persia”, which has generally emphasised the cultural achievements of Iran and the military ones of the Turks.<sup>14</sup>

The task of this book, however, is not simply to reduce the linguistic and cultural identities under consideration to an ethnically based “Turkishness” divorced from its broader context. The use of the Turkish language in its various spoken and written dialects, and the self-identification of elites as “Turkish”, comprised part of a complex of Islamic, Turkish and Persianate identities.<sup>15</sup> Within this broader Perso-Islamic culture, Turkishness – or “Rumi”-ness, to formulate it in another way – had a fluctuating significance. Let us take two contrasting examples illustrated by chapters in this book. In the thirteenth-century Delhi sultanate, despite being branded in modern historiography a period of Turkish rule, in fact as members of the military elite were promoted to sultan they generally shed the trappings of their Turkish identity.<sup>16</sup> On the other hand, in the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Deccan, newly emerged dynasties such as the Qutbshahis strenuously sought to claim for themselves (rather questionable) origins in the great Turkish empires of fifteenth-century eastern Anatolia and Iran.<sup>17</sup> To attempt to tease out some of the nuances and fluidity in this “Turkish” identity and its differing, and uneven, significance in different times and places in India over the eleventh to nineteenth century is part of the purpose of this book. To do so, however, we must also undertake a cognate but distinct task, which is to assess the historical nature of connections between India and the broader Turkish-speaking world, in particular its relatively neglected links to Anatolia and the Ottomans.

12 Vladimir Braginsky, *The Turkic-Turkish Theme in Traditional Malay Literature* (Leiden: Brill, 2015).

13 A.C.S. Peacock, “Ottomans and the Indian Ocean,” in *Oxford Research Encyclopaedia of Asian History*.

14 Cf. Canfield, “Introduction,” 12, 14.

15 For recent studies of this broader Persianate culture, see Nile Green (ed.), *The Persianate World: The Frontiers of a Eurasian Lingua Franca* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2019); Richard M. Eaton, *India in the Persianate Age, 1000-1765* (London: Allen Lane, 2019).

16 See the chapter by Blain Auer in this volume.

17 See the chapter by A.C.S. Peacock in this volume.

## 1 Turkish History and Culture between Anatolia and India

Notwithstanding the caveat above concerning the mutability and fluidity of ethnicities, it does seem that a sense of Turkishness, as distinct from being Muslim, did persist among certain groups in India into the early modern period, even if this could be swapped or complemented with other identities. Further, this Turkish identity was not uniform from either a linguistic or a social point of view. Turks from a wide range of different origins and groups lived in India, as is reflected not just by a close reading of the sources,<sup>18</sup> but also by the lexicographical evidence of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Indian dictionaries, which list numerous Turkish terms including those from different Turkish social or tribal groups, reflecting the vibrancy of the oral language and the diversity of its speakers.<sup>19</sup> Indeed, scholars have noted the development of a distinctive “Indian Turki” with its own lexical features.<sup>20</sup> This identity was sometimes articulated in Turkish-language literary production in India, of which the most famous example is the *Vaqa’i* (memoirs) of Bābur (1483-1530), founder of the Mughal dynasty. This masterpiece of Eastern Turkish literature repeatedly expresses the author’s alienation from the India in which he had founded his empire, and his longing for his Central Asian homeland in Ferghana, the land of his birth, and Kabul, where he had been prince.<sup>21</sup> It is telling that the most important surviving manuscript of this work, made in the early seventeenth century, is held in the Salar Jung Library in Hyderabad.<sup>22</sup> While this is by far the best known such work in Turkish to have been written in India, it was not the only one. Bayrām Khān (d. 1561), commander of the Mughal army, was also a noted poet in Turkish.<sup>23</sup> As Benedek Péri has shown, Turkish

18 Sunil Kumar, “The Ignored Elites: Turks, Mongols and a Persian Secretarial Class in the Early Delhi Sultanate,” *Modern Asian Studies* 43 (2009), 45-77; on Turkish in medieval India, see also Péri, “Turkish language and literature,” 228-30.

19 See the discussion in Diloram Karomat, “Turki and Hindavi in the World of Persian: Fourteenth- and Fifteenth-Century Dictionaries,” in Francesca Orisini and Samira Sheikh (eds), *After Timur Left: Culture and Circulation in Fifteenth-Century North India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2014), 130-65.

20 Ibid., 165; see also the discussion in the chapter by Benedek Péri in this volume.

21 See the study by Dale, *The Garden of the Eight Paradises*.

22 For a survey of the manuscripts, see Eiji Mano, “Editorial Choices in Preparing the Critical Edition of the *Bābur-nāma*,” in Judith Pfeiffer and Manfred Kropp (eds), *Theoretical Approaches to the Transmission and Edition of Oriental Manuscripts* (Beirut and Würzburg: Ergon Verlag, 2007), 281-7. A survey of Turkish materials in Indian libraries may be found in Ali Fuat Bilkan, *Hindistan’da Gelişen Türk Edebiyatı* (Ankara: T.C. Kültür Bakanlığı, 1998).

23 His Turkish poems are published as *Bayram Han’ın Türkçe Divanı*, ed. Münevver Tekcan (Istanbul: Beşir Kitapevi, 2007).

retained a certain cachet in court circles, where knowledge of the language could be considered one of the attributes of a gentleman into the seventeenth century and beyond.<sup>24</sup>

Yet there was more than merely language<sup>25</sup> and ethnic origins (real or imagined) that Indian rulers shared with the Turkish world to their north and west. Early Turkish rule in both India and Anatolia exhibits some remarkable common features. Both regions were conquered by Turkish Muslim dynasties, albeit partially, in roughly the same period, the eleventh century. Northern India came under the sway of the Ghaznavids (r. 977-1186), while Anatolia was seized by the Seljuqs (r. 1071-1308) and other Turkish rulers. Both Seljuqs and Ghaznavids originated from Central Asia, and their invasions, if in neither case representing the first Muslim presence in each region,<sup>26</sup> are widely taken to mark the beginnings of Muslim rule that would last in one form or another for nearly a millennium. Turkish rulers and their military supporters found themselves a tiny elite dominating a land in which the overwhelming preponderance of the population was non-Muslim – Hindu in India, Christian in Anatolia. It is perhaps telling that we find distinctive lexical items emerging apparently independently in Anatolia and India. The term *ikdîsh* or *iğdiş*, which had originally denoted “an animal bred domestically” and then a cross-bred horse,<sup>27</sup> now came in both regions to mean a person of mixed descent, half Turkish and half-Greek/Christian or Hindu.<sup>28</sup>

The early history of Turkish rule in both India and Anatolia is reliant on sources written by Persophone bureaucrats who evidently rarely understood, or even deliberately sought to mask, the ethnic origins of the elites.<sup>29</sup> In both cases, Turkish doubtless long remained the main spoken language of these

24 Peri, “Turkish Language and Literature,” 243.

25 Of course, Eastern Turkish or Chaghatay was the form of Turkish in use in India, which is rather different from Ottoman, but the two were mutually comprehensible to a large degree. For some examples of this mutual comprehensibility, see *ibid.*, 234, 241-2.

26 In the case of Anatolia, there had been a patchwork of Muslim emirates in the far east around Lake Van since Umayyad times, while towns like Tarsus and Malatya formed vital bases on the Muslim frontier with the Byzantines. In India, Multan and Sindh had been under Muslim rule since the eighth century. Indeed, Kashmir had a Turkish presence in the form of military slaves and even rulers as early as the eighth century. See André Wink, *Al-Hind: The Making of the Indo-Islamic World*, vol. 2, *The Slave Kings and the Islamic Conquest, 11th-13th Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 73-5.

27 Sir Gerard Clauson, *An Etymological Dictionary of Pre-Thirteenth Century Turkish* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 103.

28 For *ikdîsh* in India, see Karomat, “Turki and Hindavi”, 147; for the same term in Anatolia and a discussion of its etymology, see Faruk Sümer, “İğdiş,” *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* XXI (2000), 524-5.

29 Kumar, “The Ignored Elites.”

elites, but was not until much later developed as a literary language. To such bureaucrats, the complexities of the relationships between men of steppe origin were unsavoury topics, and given that such bureaucrat-litterateurs largely wrote for each other, there was little interest in discussing them. Yet in both Anatolia and India, subsequent waves of invasion and state formation reinforced this Turkish component through migration from Central Asia, as well as bringing further such Persian bureaucrats, especially in the Khwarazmian and Mongol periods.<sup>30</sup> Further, even by the thirteenth century we can see an interchange of people and culture between these two peripheral extremities of the Turkish world: Şafī al-Dīn Hindī, a Delhi-born scholar, came to Anatolia to study Sufism,<sup>31</sup> while one of the major hadith commentaries used in medieval Anatolia was that by a Lahore author of Central Asian extraction, al-Şaghānī.<sup>32</sup> Conversely, men like the fourteenth-century Anatolian Sufi Aḥmad-i Rūmī travelled as far as Awadh to spread Mevlevism in India,<sup>33</sup> while the works of Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī (d. 1273) were vastly influential in India, even in local literatures like that of Sindhi.<sup>34</sup>

The common experiences of conquest, domination and the spread of Islam may explain some of the interchanges between India and Anatolia. Striking in this regard is the enthusiasm that an Ottoman reading public evinced for the ornate early thirteenth-century chronicle of the Ghurid conquests in India, the *Tāj al-Ma'āşir* ("Crown of Deeds") by Ḥasan Niẓāmi, of which several copies survive in Istanbul, and one in Vienna that originally formed part of the library of the Ottoman sultan Bayezid II (r. 1481-1512). Indeed, according to that library's inventory, Bayezid originally possessed no fewer than seven copies of the *Tāj al-Ma'āşir*.<sup>35</sup> Christopher Markiewicz has explained the work's appeal in the following terms:

30 Ibid.; see also Thomas T. Allsen, "Population Movements in Mongol Eurasia," in Reuven Amitai and Michal Biran (eds), *Nomads as Agents of Cultural Change: The Mongols and their Eurasian Predecessors* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2018), 119-51.

31 İlyas Çelebi, "Hindī, Ebu 'Abdillāh Safīyyüddin b. Abdirrahim (Abdirahman) b. Muhammed el-Hindi el-Urmevi (ö. 715/1315)," *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* XVIII (1998), 66-7.

32 A.C.S. Peacock, *Islam, Literature and Society in Mongol Anatolia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 176-7.

33 Alphons C.M. Hamer, "An Unknown Mavlawi-Poet: Ahmad-i Rumi," *Studia Iranica* 3 (1974), 229-49.

34 Shah Abdul Latif, *Risalo*, ed. and trans. Christopher Shackle (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018).

35 Christopher Markiewicz, *The Crisis of Kingship in Late Medieval Islam: Persian Emigres and the Making of Ottoman Sovereignty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 177; for the Vienna manuscript, see G.W. Flügel, *Die arabischen, persischen und türkischen Handschriften der Kaiserlich-Königlichen Hofbibliothek zu Wien* (Vienna, 1865), no. 951.



Although separated by time and space, the geo-political landscape that Ḥasan Nizāmī described in reference to the Gangetic Plain in the early seventh/thirteenth century mirrored in many ways the Ottoman geopolitical landscape of the Balkans in the late ninth/fifteenth century. Both regions were newly conquered and scarcely Islamicized. In this sense the language and rhetorical technique that Nizāmī used to describe and laud the conquests of his patrons likely resonated for ninth/fifteenth century Ottoman readers of *Crown of Deeds* almost three centuries later, when they were themselves engaged in projects of describing and celebrating Ottoman expansion into Christian kingdoms in the Balkans.<sup>36</sup>

Until the late fifteenth century, however, these connections remained limited to the cultural field and the activities of individuals. From this point on, a political and economic relationship between the Ottoman empire and Indian states began to develop, in particular with the sultanate of Gujarat and subsequently with the Mughals.<sup>37</sup> At the same time, numerous westerners, known as Rumis (or Anatolians),<sup>38</sup> were employed as mercenaries in India, where they were especially prized for their prowess with firearms. The Ottomans' own emergence as a major power and the activities of the Portuguese in trying to shut down Indian Ocean trade routes impelled the Ottomans to seek a closer relationship with India, even sending an expeditionary force to Diu in Gujarat in 1509 and 1538. Ottoman military intervention in India may have been an abysmal failure, but it did at least leave us a major literary monument in the form of the travelogue, the *Mir'atü'l-Memalik*, by the Ottoman commander of the Indian Ocean fleet, Seydi Ali Reis (d. 1563). This described how Seydi 'Ali, having lost much of his fleet to the Portuguese, washed up in Gujarat and his subsequent travels back to Constantinople through India and Central Asia.

36 Markiewicz, *Crisis of Kingship*, 178.

37 The most comprehensive study of this relationship is now Maya Petrovich, "The Land of the Foreign Padshah: India in the Ottoman Imagination," PhD dissertation, Princeton University, 2012, which covers cultural and economic as well as political aspects, focusing on North India. Among the older literature, noteworthy is Naimur Rahman Farooqi, *Mughal-Ottoman Relations: A Study of Political & Diplomatic Relations between Mughal India and the Ottoman Empire, 1556-1748* (Delhi: Idarah-i Adabiyat-i Dilli, 1998).

38 It should be noted that while Rum does generally equate with Anatolia in languages of the Islamic world, and is often used as a synonym either for Byzantium or the Ottoman empire, the term Rumi could also have a wider semantic range, encompassing western Europeans and people of the Mediterranean region. For a discussion, see Cemal Kafadar, "A Rome Of One's Own: Reflections on Cultural Geography and Identity in the Lands of Rum," *Muqarnas* 24 (2007), 7-25; Salih Özbaran, *Bir Osmanlı Kimliği: 14.- 17. Yüzyıllarda Rum / Rumi Aidıyet ve İmgeleri* (Istanbul: Kitap Yayınları, 2004).

While doubtless written with a view to exculpating its author, it also served to introduce India to an Ottoman courtly audience.

Ottoman–Indian ties also had a commercial aspect, for India was one of the main channels through which spices were exported to the Ottoman empire, while Indian textiles were widely sold on the Ottoman market, even to the extent of compromising local industry.<sup>39</sup> Indeed, it was through these cheap, mass-produced textiles that most Ottoman subjects encountered India.<sup>40</sup> While Ottomans and Mughals did occasionally exchange embassies, after the late sixteenth century and the Ottoman retreat from political and military engagement in the broader Indian Ocean world, these commercial links probably became the most important facet of the relationship. Yet the political relevance of the Ottomans to rulers in India was felt long after the high imperial age of the sixteenth century. In 1786 Tipū Sultan, ruler of Mysore in South India, sent an embassy to the Ottomans to seek help against the British,<sup>41</sup> while after the mutiny of 1857, nineteenth-century Indian intellectuals increasingly participated in and were influenced by Islamic networks of the Ottoman empire.<sup>42</sup> In the twentieth century, India proved to be the last redoubt of support for the Khilafat movement that aimed to preserve the Ottomans' caliphate.<sup>43</sup>

Despite the fact that, to degree, a Turko-Persian culture was shared by the Ottomans, Safavids and Mughals, as well as the Central Asian khanates, it would be wrong to assume that the Ottoman–Mughal relationship was mediated by Iran in view of the geographical realities. On the contrary, there were many cultural facets that were shared only by the Mughals and Ottomans, not by the Safavids. This may come down to not just the shared experience of conquest exemplified by the works of Ḥasan Niẓāmī, discussed above, but also to religious factors. While the Safavids were Shi'ite, the Ottomans and Mughals were both Sunni (although Akbar's embrace of the *dīn-i ilāhī* does mark a temporary break with this). It is not surprising, then, that Turkish libraries yield up numerous copies of the *Fatāwā-i Ālamgīrī*, the compilation of Hanafi law made by command of the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb (r. 1658–1707), as such a text was doubtless of practical use in the Ottoman lands where the Hanafi

39 Halil İnalçık, "The India Trade," in Halil İnalçık and Donald Quataert (eds), *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, 1300–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 315–63 remains a useful introductory survey.

40 A point well made by Petrovich, "Land of the Foreign Padshah," 388–9.

41 Khwaja 'Abdul Qadir, *Waqai-i Manazil-i Rum: Tipu Sultan's Mission to Constantinople* (New Delhi: Aakar Books, 2005).

42 Seema Alavi, *Muslim Cosmopolitanism in the Age of Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015).

43 Azmi Özcan, *Pan-Islamism: Indian Muslims, the Ottomans and Britain (1877–1924)* (Leiden: Brill, 1997).

*madhhab* was officially supreme. Yet other shared tastes can be less readily reduced to simple practical arguments. The Indian Persian poet Fayzī (1547–1594), for instance, was extremely popular in the Ottoman lands, and exercised a major influence on the development of Ottoman poetry, but was largely unread in Iran.<sup>44</sup> Meanwhile, the Adilshahi dynasty of the Deccan, notwithstanding their occasional Shi‘ite inclinations and alliance with the Safavids, themselves claimed Ottoman descent, despite the latter dynasty’s fame as defenders of Sunnism and arch-opponents of the Safavids.<sup>45</sup>

## 2 Material Culture and Transregional Connections

The parallels between the historical circumstances of medieval India and Anatolia under Turkish rule have long attracted scholarly interest from art historians, even if, as Finbarr Barry Flood has shown, much of this interest derived from nineteenth-century ideas of “an inherent flair for form and design rooted in the racial heritage of the Turks.”<sup>46</sup> From such assumptions derived the efforts of earlier scholars to explain the emergence of, for example, parallel traditions of lithic architecture in medieval Anatolia and India, in contrast to Iran, where brick remained the predominant architectural idiom. Naturally, few scholars today will be satisfied by such racially determined assumptions; rather, the examination of encounter and exchange is embedded within the study of the material culture of the wider Muslim world. Nonetheless, much remains to be done to elucidate the parallels between the artistic traditions of both regions, including the question of possible exchange between the two.

The most detailed work to date that deals with the interaction of Turkish Muslims and India is Flood’s *Objects of Translation: Material Culture and Medieval “Hindu-Muslim” Encounter*, published in 2009.<sup>47</sup> Flood concentrates on

44 Munibur Rahman, “Fayzī, Abu’l-Fayz,” *Encyclopaedia Iranica* (London and Costa Mesa, CA: Encyclopaedia Iranica Foundation, 1982-); Petrovich, “Land of the Foreign Padshah,” 347–8, 362–3; see also Francis Robinson, “Ottomans-Safavids-Mughals: Shared Knowledge and Connective Systems,” *Journal of Islamic Studies* 8/2 (1997), 151–84.

45 Roy S. Fischel, “Origin Narratives, Legitimacy, and the Practice of Cosmopolitan Language in the Early Modern Deccan, India,” *Purushartha* 33 (2015), 71–95, and see further the discussion in the chapter by Peacock in this volume.

46 Finbarr Barry Flood, “Lost in Translation: Architecture, Taxonomy, and the Eastern ‘Turks,’” *Muqarnas* 24 (2007), 79–115, esp. 95.

47 Finbarr Barry Flood, *Objects of Translation: Material Culture and Medieval “Hindu-Muslim” Encounter* (Princeton, NJ/Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2009). For a summary and critique of this work, see Sheila Blair and Jonathan Bloom, “Book Review of *Objects of Translation: Material Culture and Medieval ‘Hindu-Muslim’ Encounter* by Finbarr B. Flood,”

the Ghurid period in northern India, but sometimes adduces interesting parallels with medieval Anatolia. He notes, for instance, the fluidity of religious patronage and practice in tenth-century Sindh, which he compares with the situation in medieval Anatolia, characterised by Cemal Kafadar as “the absence of a state that was interested in rigorously defining and strictly enforcing orthodoxy.”<sup>48</sup> Elsewhere, Flood notes the existence of knot motifs, which appear on various Muslim north Indian monuments of the thirteenth century such as the Qutb Minar in Delhi, the Friday mosque of Bada’un and the tomb of Iltutmish, and which resemble motifs that appear on coinage from as far west as the Turkmen polities of Anatolia and as far east as Mongolia. The exact interpretation of such motifs is problematic – they may simply be a design element, but it has also been proposed that they are to be understood as a *tamgha*, a tribal or personal sign widely used among steppe peoples. Flood interprets them as belonging to “a constellation of symbols of power – figural, abstract and textual – that were widely dispersed in Central Asian and Turkic cultures”.<sup>49</sup> Similarly, the use of red as a symbol of royalty was common to Indian and Anatolian sultans of the same period.<sup>50</sup>

It was thus not merely the parallel historical circumstances of Anatolia and India that resulted in close similarities in the expression of aspects of material culture, but the existence of a common vocabulary of power shared by each region’s political elites. Yet despite the important contribution of Flood in drawing attention to such parallels in a much more theoretically sophisticated form than previous scholars, much remains to be done. While there is a great deal of, sometimes rather nationalistic, literature on Turkish art and architecture, often in the context of the modern Turkish republic, less attention has been focused on the wider artistic and cultural interactions between people of Turkish descent and the resulting material output. A recent volume edited by Ismail Poonawalla<sup>51</sup> examines the wider Turkish presence in the Islamic world, including in western and central Asia, as well as India. The book touches

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*Art Bulletin* 93.1 (2011), 108-10. It is worth noting that although the majority of the Muslims that are addressed in Flood’s book were of Turkish origin, the words “Turk”, “Turkic”, and “Turkish” do not appear in the index of the volume.

48 Cemal Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds: The Construction of the Ottoman State* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1995), 76, cited in Flood, *Objects of Translation*, 43; and see *ibid.*, 37-59 on medieval Sindh. For a critique of Kafadar’s position, see Peacock, *Islam, Literature and Society in Mongol Anatolia*, esp. 18-27, 258-9.

49 Flood, *Objects of Translation*, 234.

50 *Ibid.*

51 Ismail K. Poonawalla (ed.), *Turks in the Indian Subcontinent, Central and West Asia* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2017).

on material culture in the context of Anatolia,<sup>52</sup> but there is still a major need for greater scholarly focus on the rich variety of artistic and architectural evidence of the encounter and interaction of Turks with the wider Islamic world, and India in particular.

In the context of the earliest Turko-Persian Islamic architecture built in the Indian subcontinent, there has been a steady increase in scholarly attention. A volume edited by Finbarr Barry Flood features eleven chapters by a number of leading scholars that examines some of the key Ghurid monuments,<sup>53</sup> while the earliest period of Indian Islamic architecture more broadly has become far better known through, among others,<sup>54</sup> the publications of Mehrdad and Natalie Shokoohy.<sup>55</sup> More recently, the earliest phase of building by Turkish and Persian Muslims in the Indus Valley has received monographic treatment by Holly Edwards.<sup>56</sup>

However, a great deal of material, as well as the nature and extent over time of the connections between the Turkish world and India in its widest sense, awaits detailed study. It is towards this goal that the attention of the final six chapters of this book are focused. Some major questions are raised by the study of the material culture which emerged as a result of the interaction of people who can be broadly understood as being Turks with the Indian subcontinent from the twelfth century onwards. Unlike Turkish history, in which there are clearly people with (or who assumed) a Turkish identity, or texts written in Turkic languages,<sup>57</sup> when it comes to assessing the artistic output which

52 See Robert Hillenbrand, "Brick versus Stone: Seljuq Architecture in Iran and Anatolia," in *ibid.*, 105-43.

53 Finbarr Barry Flood (ed.), *Piety and Politics in the Early Indian Mosque* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2008). See also Flood, "Lost in Translation".

54 See the works of Alka Patel, including: *Building Communities in Gujarāt: Architecture and Society during the Twelfth through Fourteenth Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), and "Towards Alternative Receptions of Ghurid Architecture in North India (Late Twelfth-Early Thirteenth Century CE)," *Archives of Asian Art* 54 (2009), 35-61. See also Robert Hillenbrand, "Political Symbolism in Early Indo-Islamic Mosque Architecture: The Case of Ajmir," *Iran* 26 (1988), 105-17.

55 Mehrdad Shokoohy, *Bhadreśvar: The Oldest Islamic Monument in India* (Leiden: Brill, 1988). Mehrdad and Natalie Shokoohy, *Nagaur: Sultanate and Early Mughal History and Architecture of the District of Nagaur, India* (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1993); "The Architecture of Baha al-Din Tughrul in the Region of Bayana, Rajasthan," *Muqarnas* 4 (1987), 114-32; and "The Mosques of Bayana, Rajasthan, and the Emergence of a Prototype for the Mosques of the Mughals," *Medieval History Journal* 13/2 (2010), 153-97.

56 Holly Edwards, *Of Brick and Myth. The Genesis of Islamic Architecture in the Indus Valley* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2015). See also Robert Hillenbrand, "Turco-Iranian Elements in the Medieval Architecture of Pakistan: The Case of the Tomb of Rukn-i 'Alam at Multan," *Muqarnas* 9 (1992), 148-74.

57 See Benedek Péri's chapter at the end of this book.

results from such situations it is far harder to pin any specifically “Turkish” characteristics onto any given item or building. The syncretic fusing of different traditions and the attempts to create existing forms and decorations in different materials, often by indigenous craftsmen attempting to supply an unseen but requested idiom for a Turkish or Perso-Turkish patron, makes it very hard to identify any single characteristic as Turkish. Relationships can be posited, and seemingly parallel developments can be observed *post facto*. However, clear evidence of a distinctive and mobile Turkish aesthetic remains something of a chimera which is hard to pin down.

There is perhaps a stronger case to be made for the existence of a Perso-Islamic style that was introduced into India by Turks who had become acculturated to the Persianate milieu in which many of them lived. The clear Persification of the Seljuq Turks following the establishment of their rule of Greater Iran, prior to an offshoot of the family ruling over large portions of Anatolia as the Rum Seljuqs, suggests that there is nothing inherently Turkish about the art and architecture which was created under their rule. This is despite the retention of Turkish names such as Alp Arslān and Qılıj, alongside use of both Persian names, such as Kaykāvūs, and Arabic ones, including ‘Izz al-Dīn.<sup>58</sup> What can be seen in the final six chapters of this book is that a broad array of sources came together under the patronage of Turks in India and their dealings with India, the result of which was the emergence of a complicated, and at times confusing, but ultimately successful series of new aesthetics.

### 3 The Present Volume

The present volume is divided into two sections. The first, ‘Turkish Origins, Identity and History in India’, comprises historical, largely textually based studies that often draw on comparative and transregional approaches to explore conquest and identity. The first chapter, by George Malagaris, compares three major Turkish victories of the eleventh century that have subsequently come to be seen as decisive moments in the Turkish expansion from Central Asia. These are the Ghaznavid campaign against the Indian temple of Somnath in 1025; the Seljuq victory over the Ghaznavids at Dandanqan in Central Asia in 1040, after which the Ghaznavids were forced out of Khurasan and established themselves in Lahore as a North Indian dynasty; and the Seljuq

58 For a full list of the names of Great Seljuq rulers, see Clifford Edmund Bosworth, *The New Islamic Dynasties. A Chronological and Genealogical Manual* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1996), 185-6, and *ibid.*, 213 for the Rum Seljuqs.

defeat of the Byzantines at Manzikert in eastern Anatolia in 1071. The early expansion by the Turks has often been attributed to climate change and environmental factors, obliging them both to abandon their original pasturelands. Yet as Malagaris notes, despite their common Central Asian Turkish origins, the Ghaznavids and Seljuqs differed fundamentally in their military organisation (at least at this point), with the Seljuqs being predominantly a nomadic force while the Ghaznavids relied on slave soldiers, albeit supplemented on occasion by steppe nomads. Through a detailed analysis of these three campaigns, Malagaris argues that invoking climate change as an explanatory device is unsatisfactory, and that more weight should be given to the political and personal motivations of the participants.

Stephen Frederic Dale takes a broad chronological and geographical approach comparing Turkish experiences of India, Anatolia and Iran over the eleventh to sixteenth centuries. As Dale argues, the appearance of the Turks in western Eurasia at the turn of the second millennium represents one of the great turning points in world history, yet the consequences were very different in each area. In Iran and India, the Turkish language was never adopted as a medium of government by its rulers, despite its important place at court and especially in the military. In both instances, its use in the literary field remained limited, in contrast to Central Asia and the Ottoman lands where Chaghatay (Central Asian Turkish, or Turki) and Ottoman Turkish had emerged as major and prestigious literary media by the fifteenth century. Dale argues that the “Turkishness” of these states varied greatly from one another, with Turks in India usually becoming assimilated to a broader Perso-Muslim culture, in contrast with their experience in Iran, where they retained a distinct identity but were never able to compete with the prestige of Iranian culture and the Persian language. Even for the Ottomans, their principal points in common with both Safavids and Indians were probably felt to be Perso-Islamic culture rather than any specifically Turkish elements, and the term *türk* could be used as a term of denigration, implying “rusticity”.

The question of the nature of Turkish identity in medieval India is taken up in more depth by Blain Auer, who examines the period of the Delhi sultanate in the thirteenth century. The Delhi sultanate comprised four successive dynasties – the Shamsis, Ghiyathis, Khaljis and Tughluqs – who are generally termed in modern scholarship, as much as in medieval sources, Turks, and the sultanate is sometimes characterised as a Turkish state based on a Turkish slave military. Auer investigates what Turkishness meant to medieval authors and what role it played in the make-up of the Delhi sultanate. He notes that the sultanate’s military forces came from diverse origins, including Indian ones, but Turkishness seems to have been especially associated with martial valour

and it can be hard to distinguish between slave, soldier and Turk. Yet when manumitted slaves themselves rose to become sultans, they and their descendants appear to have been divested of any Turkish identity, and rather to have assimilated to the Perso-Islamic one, losing distinctive features such as Turkish names in place of Persianate ones (a custom also found among their non-slave contemporaries, the Seljuqs of Rum). This mutability of identities doubtless reflects the fact that the sultanate was essentially a coalition of different ethnic groups.

The following three chapters deal with the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries. Maya Petrovich examines the famed vizier of one of the “Turkish” successor states to the Delhi sultanate, the Bahmanis of the Deccan, Maḥmūd Gāwān (1411-1481). Gāwān, originally from Gilan in Iran, functioned as an intermediary between the Deccani world and the Islamic west, in particular the Ottoman empire, where he gained a great reputation as a man of letters and a stylist. He also played a crucial role in the diplomatic and commercial connections of the Bahmani sultanate, while his writings shed light on the political idiom of the day. His career, and his relations with the various “foreign” groups who dominated (and destabilised) the Bahmani sultanate – such as Rumis, Abyssinians and others – offer valuable insights into the complex networks of politics in the Deccan on the eve of modernity. Indeed, these conflicts, and the frequent recourse of the sources to such ethnic terms to delineate the main competing groups in the Bahmani realm (and in the Deccan more broadly, where similar disputes also occurred), remind us that this preoccupation with ethnically named groups is not simply restricted to modern historians, but inflects our sources for the period.

A different experience of a newcomer in India is delineated in Ali Anooshahr’s study of the career of the Timurid prince Muḥammad Zamān Mīrzā, who carved out an ephemeral – and constantly moving – principality in North India at the beginning of the sixteenth century that has hitherto been largely ignored by scholarship. Anooshahr’s chapter speaks to the question of the role of Timurid legitimacy as a factor in the success of contenders for power establishing themselves in this period, and in fact suggests that practical competence and military prowess trumped Turko-Mongol descent when push came to shove. In light of this, the Mughals’ repeated appeals to their own Timurid heritage take on a new significance. It was not simply political necessity that made the Timurids emphasise their lineage, for such appeals in and of themselves would have had limited purchase. At the same time, Anooshahr provides a valuable service in reminding us of the danger of reading the involvement of Mughals and others in India through teleologically tinted spectacles, as a path to power and domination. There were doubtless quite a few



transient enterprises like that of the Timurid adventurer Muḥammad Zamān, which petered out leaving little concrete to show. Scarcely more durable, as Anooshahr notes, was the polity established by Bābur's cousin Muḥammad Ḥaydar Dughlāt in Kashmir, which is, however, better attested owing to Ḥaydar Dughlāt's memoirs.

Questions of dynastic descent and legitimacy are examined in the final chapter in this part, by Peacock, which looks at the connection of the Qutbshahi rulers of the Deccan in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to their putative ancestors, the Turkmen Qaraqoyunlu dynasty that dominated eastern Anatolia and Iran in the first half of the fifteenth century. Drawing on hitherto neglected manuscript histories of the Qutbshahis, Peacock shows how the story of the dynasty's Qaraqoyunlu ancestry was constantly reshaped in response to external threats and the need to formulate a version of dynastic ancestry compatible with the Qaraqoyunlu's search for an alliance against the Mughals with the Safavids, who had, in their origins, been at odds with the Qaraqoyunlu rulers. For these chroniclers, then, the events of two centuries previously in eastern Anatolia were a matter of great sensitivity. At the same time, if this Qaraqoyunlu connection only became important for the Qutbshahis in the late sixteenth century, it certainly was taken seriously by the sultans themselves, as is indicated by annotations on manuscripts from their personal libraries and indeed the selection of literary works in which they evinced an interest. Even if there is much reason to doubt the veracity of all the Deccani sultans' claims to Turkish ancestry (which are sometimes in any event contradictory), there was much more at stake here than a mere literary topos or legitimatory device for external consumption.

The second half of this book, consisting of chapters 7 to 12, deals with studies of the art, literature and material culture resulting from some of the myriad instances of Turkish encounters with the Indian subcontinent, and represents a small step forward in the understanding of this long and complex process. Architecture, numismatics and a range of other material-cultural elements are examined, using an array of different methodologies.

In Chapter 7 Shailendra Bhandare takes a reverse chronological approach to the iconographic analysis of the use of the lion-and-sun motif on coins minted in both India and Anatolia across the *longue durée*. Building on the anthropological approach taken by Flood, he draws a line between the Pahlavi and Qajar usage of the symbol in the modern era, through the Safavids to the Mughals under Jahāngīr, and examines its long-term associations with kingship. Attention focuses on its use on Ilkhanid coinage before turning to the various Turkish dynasties in Anatolia. The earliest examples were struck under the Rum Seljuqs in the middle of the thirteenth century. The study of the Seljuq usage

leads back to the introduction of the motif to India and ideas of transculturation. He concludes by briefly addressing the 'horseman' type of coins from both Anatolia and India, and the symbolic significance of such an image in Turkish culture.

In the following chapter Richard McClary examines the resulting structures which emerged when the brick-building tradition of Iran and Central Asia introduced by Turkish invaders encountered the indigenous lithic culture of construction in both India and Anatolia in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. The hybrid styles which emerged blended elements of the two traditions together into a new and distinctively Indo-Islamic style on the one hand, and an entirely different one in Anatolia on the other. The focus starts in Erzurum, and the relationship between the Tepsi minaret and comparable structures built by the Turkish Qarakhanids in Central Asia, before moving on to the use of spolia in Islamic monuments in both Anatolia and India. The introduction of twin minarets is followed by a study of some of the less well-known Ghurid monuments, including the one at Khatu, the Ukha Mandir in Bayana and the Chaurasi Khamba in Kaman. The examination of different approaches to spolia usage draws on aspects of Flood's research, before looking at the phenomenon of stone into brick, whereby Indian craftsmen trained in stone carving worked in brick on monuments in the Punjab. He concludes with a study of the Sultan Ghari complex south of Delhi, where not only Hindu and Jain but also much earlier Gupta-era Buddhist spolia was used.

Moving forward in time, and south to the Deccan, in Chapter 9 Sara Mondini examines the poorly studied and distinctively autonomous Adilshahi architecture of the Deccan. Distinct from the Mughal monuments built to the north, this chapter studies the Iranian and Central Asian characteristics of the architecture of the region through the prism of the *mih̄rāb* of the vast Bijapur Jami mosque. Added to the late sixteenth-century mosque in 1636, a close study reveals the complex social and religious nature of the society and the syncretic character of the resulting material culture. The astonishing programme of paintings and inscriptions on and around the *mih̄rāb* is placed in its wider cultural context, and the entire composition is shown to have soon become a symbol for the renewed Sunnism of the dynasty. The latter part of the chapter deals with the specific details of the painted decoration, and highlights the religious significance that the choice of inscriptions signifies.

We move forward in time in the following chapter, where Suraiya Faroqi takes a wide-ranging and comparative approach to the study of the production of courtly goods in both the Ottoman and Mughal worlds. This includes their uses throughout the highly stratified upper tiers of the two societies, from the mid-sixteenth to the mid-eighteenth century. She takes a quadripartite

approach to the topic, first addressing the aims of the patron, then the historiography of miniature painting in the two empires, while the third section examines pious foundations and the limited available resources concerning the payment for goods and services. In the final part of the chapter the internal functioning of court ateliers is addressed. It is clear that despite the differences between the two courts, including a greater prevalence of artists signing their work in the Mughal context, the individual interests and desires of any given ruler had a powerful effect on the ateliers during their rule.

The penultimate chapter, by Pınar Emiralioğlu, is titled “Mapping the Boundaries of the World: India and the Indian Ocean in the Early Modern Ottoman Geographical Consciousness”. It is a study of the political and economic connections between representatives of the Ottoman empire and the local communities in the wider Indian Ocean region. Emiralioğlu primarily focuses on the variety of ways in which the Indian Ocean was depicted in the Ottoman geographical imagination in the early modern period. The Portuguese interests in and approaches to the region are contrasted with those of the Ottomans, with the former found to have had a far more systematic approach. The Ottomans, unsurprisingly, were more focused on the Mediterranean Sea, but did aim to counter Safavid claims to hegemony in the Caucasus, Kurdistan and Iraq. Emiralioğlu starts with a study of the *Book of Navigation* compiled by Piri Reis, before moving on to the expedition of Seydi Ali Reis to Gujarat and his two books, *Book of the Ocean* and *Mirror of Lands*. The political aspects of the latter work are examined before a study of the mapping of the region, and the translation by Katib Çelebi of European atlases. She concludes with a section addressing the Dimaşki translation of Blaeu’s *Atlas Maior* and its reception. Emiralioğlu’s chapter is suggestive of some of the means of transmission of knowledge between India and the Ottoman lands, and closer study of such textual traditions can shed further light on broader patterns of transregional exchange.

This volume concludes with a detailed study by Benedek Péri of a series of late-Mughal texts written in Turkish. Little attention has been paid to the use of the Turkic language in India, and it appears to have largely been the preserve of soldiers in the early period. This changed with the advent of the Mughals, and the connection to the Turkic literary heritage of the Timurids. The chapter addresses a manuscript in the library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (Perzsa O. 87), which contains a number of different texts compiled over the course of many years. The longest Turkish text is Fuẕūlī’s *Dīvān*, and his life and work are examined prior to a study of the text itself. The work is shown to be a mixed Iranian Turkic/Azeri-Ottoman variant, yet written in India. The following section, dated 1175/61, concerns the poetic works of ‘Ubayd Allāh Khān, a

Shaybanid ruler of Bukhara. The chapter concludes with a focus on the sections on linguistics in these works: two on Central Asian Turkic as well as two longer Turkic-Persian word lists and vocabularies. This detailed study of the manuscript makes it clear that the copyist did not know Turkish languages very well, but much can be inferred concerning the original compiler of the work, a late-Mughal *mīrzā* named Mīr Sa‘d Allāh.

Together, the chapters in this volume indicate the multifaceted nature of Turkish engagements with India. Clearly, cultural encounters cannot be reduced to simplistic, racially determined patterns, but at the same time there is reason to believe that Turkish or steppe connections may have contributed to transregional patterns of artistic exchange, as is discussed in Bhandare’s study. Moreover, collectively the chapters suggest that the nature of this identity in the Indian environment was subject to numerous ebbs and flows. In the Delhi sultanate, a “Turkish” identity seems to have been discarded by the military elite on assuming rule in favour of a Persianate one. In contrast, in the Deccan a specifically Turkish identity was vigorously espoused by rulers such as the Qutbshahis and the Adilshahis. Such developments can only be understood in both the political and cultural context of the period, and are not susceptible to overarching generalisations. Nonetheless, the chapters in this volume suggest a much more profound engagement between India and not just Central Asia, but also Anatolia, than has often been recognised. It is to be hoped that subsequent studies will further flesh out this picture.

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**PART 1**

*Turkish Origins, Identity and History in India*







# Warfare and Environment in Medieval Eurasia: Turkic Frontiers at Dandanqan, Somnath and Manzikert

*George Malagaris*

Medieval Eurasia experienced a persistent struggle between nomadic and sedentary peoples. Pivotal landscapes clustered around Iran, with its central desert plateau rimmed by mountains and seas, which connected the peoples and regions of Central Asia and India with those of Anatolia, the Caucasus and the Middle East. During the eleventh century, with the advent of the Seljuqs, Central Asia and Iran transformed from rule by settled urban governments, such as that of the Ghaznavids, to those of the rural steppe. Despite their common dynastic origins among the Turkic peoples of Central Asia, the Ghaznavids and Seljuqs differed fundamentally in the leadership and organisation of their armies as well as their use of the natural environment. These contrasts evoke characteristics of other contemporaneous settled powers, such as the Byzantines, and open the issue of climate as a factor in victories and defeats.

This study investigates the causes of Ghaznavid defeat by the Seljuqs at Dandanqan in late spring 1040, placing it in the context of the earlier Ghaznavid campaign on Somnath in early winter 1026 and the later Seljuq victory over the Byzantines at Manzikert in late summer 1071, at battlegrounds in different regional and environmental conditions during the mid-eleventh century. The battle at Dandanqan marked the decisive end of Ghaznavid rule in Central Asia and Iran, and forced them ultimately to transform into an Afghan and Punjabi state, in modern geographical terms, focused on Ghazna and Lahore in an area roughly centred on ancient Gandhara. Dandanqan sits in modern Turkmenistan; Somnath lies in Gujarat, India; and Manzikert is located in eastern Turkey. Out of these conflicts, Dandanqan has been the least studied in scholarship while Somnath has received relatively more attention and Manzikert has been the most thoroughly examined.

In the interests of strengthening these comparisons, this discussion will foreground the objective conditions of these battles as exemplified in particular through textual sources, and treat subsequently the historiographic circumstances and motivations of authors, texts and material evidence. This approach towards each historical event allows for uncovering further evidence in the

future about the eleventh century and presupposes the legitimate need for source criticism. Each episode is presented, its key sources analysed and its significance interpreted in light of the main historical aim. While maintaining a focus on the violent conflicts of the time as well as regional and environmental factors at work, these means will also enable an assessment of the value of different evidence, whether from Arabic, Persian, Sanskrit, or Greek sources.

This comparative and global perspective highlights essential factors for success in warfare in medieval Eurasia, whether antagonists were composed primarily of the nomadic forces of the Seljuqs or the settled soldiers of the Ghaznavids and Byzantines. Despite great differences between Ghaznavid and Byzantine political cultures and state formation, both of these sedentary armies employed nomadic soldiers on a temporary or long-term basis. The Ghaznavids drew on Turkic nomads for campaigns as far south as Makran, and the Byzantines came to employ these horsemen for centuries. In this spectrum of possibilities, combatants encountered common human and natural challenges in Central Asia, India and Anatolia alike, particularly in terms of the logistics of water. Yet these wars also reveal underlying social and political contexts for the participants, their armies and their world, calling into question the determining role of the natural environment and the potential for climate change to explain military outcomes, such as the expansion of the Seljuqs, across medieval Eurasia.<sup>1</sup>

## 1 Dandanqan

As conflict intensified ahead of the battle of Dandanqan, the Ghaznavids and Seljuqs clashed on the plain of 'Ali-abad near Balkh during a spring morning in 1039, after a series of indecisive skirmishes. The Ghaznavid army arrayed their fully equipped troops and mounts, including thirty elephants, many in rut and belligerent. Amir Mas'ūd (d. 1041), son of the mighty Maḥmūd (d. 1030), grew impatient with his cautious soldiers. Exchanging his elephant for a horse, he amassed a thousand fierce *ghulāms*, and charged until the enemy retreated into the steppe. Yet he refrained from pursuit, despite calls from his soldiers,

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<sup>1</sup> I wish to thank Andrew Peacock and Jürgen Paul for their insightful comments, the anonymous reviewers of this volume and the attendees of the Late Antique and Byzantine Seminar in the Ioannou Centre for Classical and Byzantine Studies, University of Oxford, where a portion of this research was presented on 6 February 2019.

asserting that the Seljuq Turkmen were sufficiently impressed by the Ghaznavids' might and that the desert posed risks for the royal army.<sup>2</sup>

The full circumstances revealed themselves in the following month: Ghaznavid spies reported overhearing expressions of relief in the Seljuq camp. Purportedly, the nomads lamented that "it is not possible to withstand the fully arrayed (*maṣāf*) army of this [Ghaznavid] monarch, and if someone had followed our tracks when we were in retreat, we would have been brought to perdition (*zār*)".<sup>3</sup> Ghaznavid intelligence relayed another conversation at a council (*majlis*) of the Seljuqs in the early summer of 1039. Warriors loyal to commanders Ṭughrl (d. 1063), Chaghri (d. 1059) and Musā Yabghū (d. c. 1053) gathered to debate whether they should stand and fight or flee westward and leave the region altogether. Ṭughrl asserted,

Rayy, Jibal, and Gurgan lie before us, and there is only a handful of oppressive troops along with some Daylamites and Kurds. The correct action (*ṣawāb*) is that we go, and for a long while remain at the margins (*karāna*), since the passes to Anatolia (*Rūm*) are without adversaries. Let us leave Khurasan and its environs with its sultan of such greatness and magnificence who has such a [large] army and [numerous] subjects.<sup>4</sup>

The frontier of Rum twinkled before the nomads' eyes, along with opportunities in the corridor of northern Iran, but only once Central Asian lands closed for expansion. Ṭughrl derided the "musta'kila", paid troops who drew regular salary and allowance, connoting that the Ghaznavid soldiers were weak and parasitic with fundamentally different motivations than those of the Seljuqs. His brother Chaghri rejected this idea as "a great delusion", which would embolden their Ghaznavid enemies, adding,

I saw the battle of 'Ali-abad. They have as much men and equipment (*ālat*) as you might wish, but their baggage (*buna*) is heavy, so that it is not possible for them to separate themselves from it, since they cannot

2 Nomadic Seljuq Turks who converted to Islam around the tenth century were also known as Turkmen.

3 Abū al-Faḥrī Bayhaqī, *Tārīkh-i Bayhaqī*, ed. 'A. Fayyāz and Gh. Qāsim (Mashhad: Dānishgāh-i Mashhad, 1971), 754; Abū al-Faḥrī Bayhaqī, *The History of Beyhaqī: the History of Sultan Mas'ud of Ghazna, 1030-1041*, trans. C.E. Bosworth and M. Ashtiany (Boston, MA: Ilex Foundation Series, 2011), Vol. 2, 251. All translations are my own based on available editions, and reference to others is for comparison. Notes are necessarily selective in light of the format.

4 The dynasty was founded by Seljuq (d. c. 1000), grandfather of Ṭughrl (d. 1063) and Chaghri (d. 1060). Bayhaqī, *Tārīkh-i Bayhaqī*, 755; *History of Beyhaqī*, Vol. 2, 252.

survive without it. So they remain wondering if they should save themselves or their baggage, yet we are unattached (*mujarradīm*) and without baggage.<sup>5</sup>

The Seljuqs obtained an asymmetrical advantage by separating themselves from their baggage before key engagements. Despite their fear of the Ghaznavid army and its numerous allies, the nomads perceived that thirsty mercenaries burdened by impedimenta could be countered by light and swift horsemen focused on the essentials of warfare. Agreeing on their course, the Seljuqs returned to the saddle, determined to defend their regional survival and seek out their enemies' weaknesses.

Bayhaqī (d. 1077), the Ghaznavid secretary and historian, recorded these reports from Ghaznavid espionage about the conversations among the Seljuq leadership. An eyewitness to Dandanqan, he recounted the disaster, along with his harrowing escape, in his surviving *History* of the reign of Mas'ūd, whom he alternately terms amir or sultan, depending on the context. Although his rhetorical aims can be interrogated, his account, based on privileged access to the Ghaznavid court, contains vital detail about the course of affairs.

Lost opportunities and logistical constraints bedevilled the Ghaznavids across northern Khurasan. When the Seljuqs encamped at Nishapur in late autumn 1039, the Ghaznavids attempted to block the nomads' route to Tus. Although the army departed swiftly, Mas'ūd had imbibed some soporific theriac; his elephant drivers, fearing to wake him from his drugged sleep, cruised at a leisurely pace, forfeiting the opportunity to strike before dawn.<sup>6</sup> When Mas'ūd finally arrived, unperturbed, he stayed at Nasa for a few days indulging in wine, since it was a pleasant region.<sup>7</sup> Along with an absence of leadership, this episode also reveals an autocratic aspect to Ghaznavid government, which typically concentrated on a singular authority, even when matters affected the state as a whole.

Drought and famine spread across Khurasan during the winter of 1039-40, afflicting everyone in the region, whether nomadic or sedentary. The hungry army's prolonged stay in their unstable northern tier sapped scare resources from their settled subjects. Ghaznavid vizier Aḥmad b. 'Abd al-Ṣamad (d. c. 1043) expressed concern that the shortages not only necessitated a long stay in Khurasan, but also inhibited the Ghaznavids' ability to intervene in machinations from unreliable clients in Khwarazm. While the sultan indulged himself,

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Bayhaqī, *Tārīkh-i Bayhaqī*, 804; *History of Beyhaqi*, Vol. 2, 294-5.

<sup>7</sup> Bayhaqī, *Tārīkh-i Bayhaqī*, 808; *History of Beyhaqi*, Vol. 2, 298.

the vizier dreaded their slipping geopolitical position due to the inadequacy of military supplies.

The massive army began to suffer. Outside the stricken city of Nishapur, the Ghaznavids encamped in the garden of Shadyakh in January 1040. Mas'ūd pursued wine parties and other pleasures during a “bitterly cold” winter, when many died, including soldiers and civilians. Eventually, the army needed until midday prayer to gather a five-day supply of food and fodder, yet they lacked bread and meat for the *ghulāms* and hay and barley for the horses. The harsh conditions affected both sides of the conflict: Turkmen were unable to harass the Ghaznavids, as “they were also busy with their own matters, since famine (*qaht*) and dearth (*tangī*) were present everywhere.”<sup>8</sup> Scarcity afflicted Ghaznavid and Seljuq combatants alike.

Heedless to necessity, Mas'ūd delayed departure from Nishapur to celebrate the start of Nawruz, only decamping by early spring in March 1040. On the road, he drank wine while waiting for grain shipments, while his advisors worried that the absence of food and fodder could result in a revolt. After the loss of countless horses on the road, the Ghaznavids arrived at Sarakhs. By 28 Sha'bān 431/14 May 1040, they entered the parched town, deserted and without vegetation. In a state of despair, the ravenous troops were shocked when they found little but rotten dried vegetables to toss before their mounts, who began to die from hunger.<sup>9</sup> Dark omens gathered.

The spring of 1040 may have been particularly dry and hot in the Merv-Sarakhs region. Normally, water supplies were expected to be abundant, the steppe flowering and the weather agreeable, with moderate evening temperatures. These differences may have been local perturbations of the weather, however, rather than evidence of climate change. Peasants may have fled and fields may have lain untilled, in the face of Ghaznavid exactions and Seljuq predation. When alliances switched from one side to another, settled inhabitants ran the risk of losing their hands, their eyes or even their heads, as episodes from chronicles on Sarakhs and other towns indicate.<sup>10</sup>

Warning against travel to Merv, leading men from the army and government met with Mas'ūd, urging him to move from Sarakhs to Herat. They stressed that there was little water or food along the way to Merv, which risked disturbances among the troops. Mas'ūd rejected the advice violently, berating their messengers with vulgar insults, accusing them of treachery and threatening to execute

8 For these passages, see Bayhaqī, *Tārīkh-i Bayhaqī*, 810-11; *History of Beyhaqi*, Vol. 2, 299-301.

9 Bayhaqī, *Tārīkh-i Bayhaqī*, 817-19; *History of Beyhaqi*, Vol. 2, 304-5.

10 Especially that of Gardīzī, alongside the context of the social and political dynamics found in Bayhaqī and in Bayhaqī's section on the history of Khwarazm by al-Bīrūnī.

the next person who raised the issue.<sup>11</sup> The Ghaznavid sultan displayed a rigid leadership style, unable to adapt to contrary viewpoints and realities.

For the vizier, the loss of military discipline was the fundamental issue, rather than environmental or other circumstances. He decried the condition of the army to the commanders, explaining that hungry cavalymen and palace *ghulāms* had been forced to ride camels rather than horses, and that the Indians, along with other infantrymen, were also famished. The vizier feared that the soldiers were under severe pressure and that their endurance had reached its limit.<sup>12</sup> Hailing from Central Asia, Iran and India, and accustomed to a variety of climates and seasons, the diverse soldiers all complained bitterly about their meagre supplies and distressed mounts. Nevertheless, Mas'ūd once again rejected the advice of his counsellors and insisted that they press on towards distant Merv.

Dragging their belongings, Ghaznavid troops marched in the arid steppe. They found little water, its dearth never before experienced on such a scale; desperately dug wells produced sweet and acrid sources. The Seljuqs burned reed beds, whose hot ash further dehydrated and demoralised their opponents, creating a sense of foreboding and obscuring the nomads' movements. Lacklustre in the face of Seljuq harassment, the troops frustrated Mas'ūd, who needed continual reminding that his soldiers fought poorly due to their paucity of horses, with the few available weakened severely from want of barley. In response to their anguish, Mas'ūd handed out bags of money to encourage their forward movement towards Merv. Commands and cash substituted for food and water.

As the combatants trundled towards their reckoning, the will to fight weakened on both sides. Erstwhile royal *ghulāms* who had defected from the Ghaznavids the previous year were surreptitiously joining up with the march, running alongside the still-loyal troops mounted on camels and attempting to seduce them from their posts. Some exhausted and thirsty mercenaries turned their ears to the call of their former comrades-in-arms. Ghaznavid spies also reported that the Seljuqs held another council, and once again the urge to flee beckoned.

Ṭughrl's circle recommended again that they send their baggage forward, depart from Khurasan, and take control of Gurgan and its poorly armed Persian (*tāzīkān*) inhabitants, which would also open the option of moving further west towards Ray and Isfahan. Ṭughrl acknowledged the suffering that

11 Mas'ūd follows with terms of homosexual abuse, see Bayhaqī, *Tārīkh-i Bayhaqī*, 817; *History of Beyhaqi*, Vol. 2, 304.

12 Bayhaqī, *Tārīkh-i Bayhaqī*, 821; *History of Beyhaqi*, Vol. 2, 307.

they had endured that winter. Chaghri listened and finally broke his silence, saying that it was too late for this option because the Seljuqs had severely antagonised the Ghaznavids, so they were obliged to “fight to the death”. He agreed that the baggage should be sent away, but primarily for the sake of ensuring that combat riders were unencumbered before engaging with the enemy. Chaghri observed,

This famine, which has been upon us and which is continuing, has affected them in the same manner, as we know from trustworthy reports. As of today, at least we have had for some time sufficient fodder and our horses and men are rested, while they are just coming out of the desert. [Retreat] would be a sign of weakness (*‘ajaz*) and we should not fear them.<sup>13</sup>

Chaghri knew that scarcity afflicted both sides, as both Seljuqs and Ghaznavids relied on intelligence about one another. He successfully argued that battle had become a necessity and that the Seljuqs had obtained a temporary advantage on the basis of their superior recuperation and supply arrangements. Chaghri’s opinion prevailed as all purportedly agreed, but in a sense the nomads had combined the strategies of the different leaders and their factions by simultaneously separating themselves from the vulnerabilities of their baggage and weaker members of the group, while pressing forward with their most effective fighting forces. Seljuq desperation and their sense of timing combined with a political structure composed of multiple potential centres of authority.

On the road towards Merv, the Ghaznavids, despite their greatly weakened state, continued to repel Seljuq skirmishes. Soon after 8 Ramadan 431/23 May 1040, they arrived at the fortress of Dandanqan, a relatively isolated site containing a small settlement between the Murghab and Tejen fertile zones.<sup>14</sup> The entrenched inhabitants had just confronted the nomads and hesitated to open the gates. Mas’ūd ordered,

<sup>13</sup> Bayhaqī, *Tārīkh-i Bayhaqī*, 827-8; *History of Beyhaqi*, Vol. 2, 312-13.

<sup>14</sup> Bayhaqī states that the Ghaznavids reached the fortress of Dandanqan the following noon, but Ḥusaynī puts the date as 8 Ramadan, which may have come from a cursory reading of Bayhaqī. See Bayhaqī, *Tārīkh-i Bayhaqī*, 829; *History of Beyhaqi*, Vol. 2, 314; and Ṣadr al-Dīn ‘Alī ibn Nāṣir Ḥusaynī, *The History of the Seljuq State: A Translation with Commentary of the Akhbār al-dawla al-saljūqīyya*, trans. C.E. Bosworth (New York: Routledge, 2011), 16.



“Find out about cisterns for the mounts (*chahār-pāyān*).” They replied, “In the fortress, there are five wells (*chāh*) and they will provide enough water for the army. There are also four wells outside the fortress, [into] which the enemy has thrown carcasses and blocked them. Within an hour, we can set them aright. From here to the [other] pool of water, which our master has been told about, is five farsangs, and there is no water to be found anywhere else.”<sup>15</sup>

Ghaznavid commanders and advisers may or may not have told the truth about the water, but they knew that the army needed to stop. They preferred fixing fouled wells and purifying water to embarking on another stage of travel. When they begged Mas‘ūd to halt for temporary reprovisioning, he replied that seven or eight wells were not enough water for a large army. Ominously, the amir demanded that they move on immediately to the pool.

Order deteriorated as soon as they departed. Discipline dissolved when hundreds of palace *ghulāms* seized horses from the other troops, joining those who had surreptitiously acquired mounts at night and fleeing into the Seljuq camp.<sup>16</sup> These dynamics of nomadic and sedentary warriors sat along a continuum of potential loyalties and behaviours, despite the predominance of forces from one type or another in their respective camps.

The amir’s personal guard protected him until they were able to follow the course of a dry riverbed towards the pool, pausing briefly before heading onwards in haste, the Seljuqs on their heels while the Ghaznavid army and its officials scattered. All along the road they passed coats of mail, cuirasses, shields and other discarded impedimenta. Dandanqan had been lost, and Amir Mas‘ūd’s life soon followed, when he was killed by mutineers during a flight to India in the winter of 1041.

### 1.1 Sources and Reception

As foreshadowed above, the chroniclers’ subjectivities shaped their interpretation of events, whether they wrote from direct eyewitness experience or from indirect means, including reliable textual accounts. The conditions of production, cultural circumstances and means of textual survival have inevitably shaped what we can know about the central Eurasian world a millennium ago. Of course, not all military confrontations were recorded yet neither should we

15 Bayhaqī, *Tārīkh-i Bayhaqī*, 834; *History of Beyhaqī*, Vol. 2, 318. In the medieval Islamic period, five farsakh amounted to about 30 km / 19 miles or roughly a day’s march; see Hinz, “Farsakh,” *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (Leiden: Brill, 1960-2005).

16 Bayhaqī, *Tārīkh-i Bayhaqī*, 834; *History of Beyhaqī*, Vol. 2, 318.

assume that substantial events are absent or their objective descriptive value distorted beyond recognition. There is no need to imagine additional violence which may or may not have existed, when much already can be known and reasonably inferred from the evidence.

Bayhaqī's moralistic and normative viewpoint shapes his account of Dandanqan. The reported speech of the Ghaznavids and Seljuqs fits almost too neatly the rhetorical aims of his narrative, leading to the suspicion that his ethical aims have more import than facts. The conventions of genre can determine the presentation of events and have been the object of study for literary and discursive analysis.<sup>17</sup> Bayhaqī often has a sense for fatal causation and a strong belief in ideals of rulership. Certain episodes may be worth interrogating for their historicity, such as the *topoi* of espionage reports from the nomads' camp, yet it is equally believable that the Ghaznavids had planted spies among their enemies. Bayhaqī certainly supports the dynasty, although he criticises Mas'ūd in his determination to explain failures and defeats. Bayhaqī repeatedly mentions the amir's personality flaws, including his indulgence, loss of opportunities and stubbornness.

Nevertheless, this eyewitness to the events insisted that history must be reliable and truthful and proved his insistence on sound information and direct experience by giving lengthy passages from the history of Khwarazm by al-Bīrūnī, the well-regarded polymath of the court.<sup>18</sup> Because of Bayhaqī's access to the Ghaznavid state archives and high officials, his version of events usually carries a ring of truth, even if the reader may not always agree with his interpretation. Other accounts of Dandanqan reinforce the value of Bayhaqī's view of the conflict.

Gardīzī (d. c. 1041-52), another Ghaznavid secretary and chronicler, gives a much shorter version of events, with hardly two dozen lines.<sup>19</sup> Gardīzī writes

17 For the ethical element in Bayhaqī, see J.S. Meisami, *Persian historiography: to the end of the twelfth century* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), 79-108. For a study of Bayhaqī's rhetorical and literary aspects, see M. Waldman, *Toward a Theory of Historical Narrative: A Case Study in Perso-Islamicate Historiography* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 1980). By way of context, additional dynamics can be seen in the contemporaneous Arabic chronicler al-Utbī, whose cultural imagination has been explored in A. Anooshahr, "Utbī and the Ghaznavids at the Foot of the Mountain," *Iranian Studies*, 38/2 (2005), 271-91, and his social conditions described in A.C.S. Peacock's "Utbī's Al-Yamīnī: Patronage, Composition, and Reception," *Arabica*, 54/4 (2007), 500-25.

18 Bayhaqī, *Tārīkh-i Bayhaqī*, 905; *History of Beyhaqī*, Vol. 2, 371. For discussion of al-Bīrūnī's method, see G. Malagaris, *Bīrūnī* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019).

19 'Abd al-Ḥayy ibn Ḥāḥḥāḥ Gardīzī, *Tārīkh-i Gardīzī*, ed. 'Abd al-Ḥayy Ḥabībī (Tehran: Dunyā-yi Kitāb, 1984), 436-7; trans C.E. Bosworth as *The Ornament of Histories: A History of the Eastern Islamic Lands AD 650-1041* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2011), 110.

about the locals' refusal to pay taxes to the Ghaznavids in famine-stricken Sarakhs, which led to the destruction of the citadel, mutilation through amputation of hands, and executions of the resisters. He emphasises the aggressive moves of the Seljuq Turkmen and Mas'ūd's willingness to fight; indeed, both Bayhaqī and Gardizī assert that Mas'ūd fought strongly against the nomads once the actual battle was under way. Gardizī refers to Mas'ūd as the "martyr amir" (*amīr shahīd*) due to his later murder at the hands of mutinous soldiers. Unlike Bayhaqī, however, Gardizī gives little information on the composition of the Ghaznavid military or their extensive heavy baggage. Curiously, he relates neither the monarch's drinking and carousing nor the water scarcity, drought and famine which demoralised their forces. In the absence of a critique of leadership or a discussion of the demoralised army, Gardizī's account does not explain well the reasons for Ghaznavid defeat.

Seljuq sources in general offer less information on Dandanqan. Ṣahīr Al-Dīn Nīshāpūrī's *Saljūqnāma*, composed around 1177 for the Seljuq prince Ṣuḡhrīl III (d. 1194) became a source for later Persian chronicles, such as the contemporaneous *Rāḥat al-Sudūr* of Rāvandī (d. after 1205) and the later *Jāmi' al-Tavārikh* of Rashīd al-Dīn (d. 1318).<sup>20</sup> Nīshāpūrī gives the main elements of Bayhaqī's account in about a dozen lines without significant emendation, although he believes incorrectly that the battle occurred in 429/1037-8. He recounts the Seljuq blockage of wells and the effects on the animals and the troops, the abandonment of baggage and treasures, and the fleeing sovereign's single blow which shattered one of his pursuers. He says nothing on the composition of the army, although he repeats the criticism of Mas'ūd's indulgence with amusements and spectacle.<sup>21</sup>

The Ayyubid author Bundārī (d. c. 1241), who wrote an abridgement of a Seljuq chronicle by 'Imād al-Dīn al-Kātib al-Isfahānī (d. 1201), appears only to have a single mention of the fortress in Dandanqan and provides nothing on the battle, informing us only that Mas'ūd was defeated by the Seljuqs and

20 For surveys of Seljuq historical writing, see A.C.S. Peacock, *The Great Seljuk Empire* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015), 13; A.C.S. Peacock, "Court Historiography of the Seljuq Empire in Iran and Iraq: Reflections on Content, Authorship and Language," *Iranian Studies* 47/2 (2014), 327-45.

21 Ṣahīr al-Dīn Nīshāpūrī, *The Saljūq-Nāma of Ṣahīr Al-Dīn Nīshāpūrī*, ed. A.H. Morton ([Warminster]: Gibb Memorial Trust, 2004), 11-3, from the original manuscript in Persian. For translation from an adapted and altered text in Rashīd al-Dīn's *Jāmi' al-Tavārikh*, see Ṣahīr al-Dīn Nīshāpūrī, *The History of the Saljuq Turks from the Jāmi' Al-Tavārikh: An Ilkhanid Adaptation of the Saljūq-Nāma of Ṣahīr Al-Dīn Nīshāpūrī*, trans. K.A. Luther and C.E. Bosworth (Richmond: Curzon, 2001), 38-9.

giving the incorrect year of 430.<sup>22</sup> The varied dates and the relatively limited narrative in later authors suggest a certain disinterest about the precise timing of this Seljuq victory.

The *Akḥbār al-dawla al-saljūqiyya* attributed to al-Ḥusaynī (d. c. 1262) contains about a dozen lines on the events. It purports that Mas'ūd dreamt in Nishapur that smoke and blood poured forth from his eyes; weeping, he supposedly despaired and realised that kingly power and hopes had deserted him. When dissension broke out among the Ghaznavids, the Seljuqs attacked fiercely.<sup>23</sup> This account, embellished with a portentous dream, emphasises the demoralised and undisciplined troops, ignoring the water and food difficulties. Elsewhere, the author comments simply that Mas'ūd's defeat brought power to the Seljuqs.<sup>24</sup>

Although not strictly a Seljuq chronicler, Ibn al-Athīr (d. 1233) includes a section on Mas'ūd in the appropriate year. In roughly two dozen lines, he tells of Mas'ūd's drinking and neglect of the enemy. He mentions the problem with water which led to dissension, but does not indicate the Seljuqs' role in constricting supplies. He notices the conflict between different military units, which was exploited by the Seljuqs and resulted in desertion and the plunder of Ghaznavid *matériel*.<sup>25</sup>

## 1.2 *Baggage, Water and Men*

We have considered Dandanqan chronologically in order to understand the process which led to the defeat of a settled army by nomads. The historiography suggests that the clash became far more significant for the Ghaznavids than for the Seljuqs due to the loss of their northern territories and the subsequent assassination of Mas'ūd. By contrast, Seljuq sources record less detail, even though the victory paved the way to their conquest of Iran and Anatolia. A thematic view of Dandanqan reveals more underlying causes.

The Ghaznavids knew many of their own vulnerabilities. In an ominous conversation with Mas'ūd prior to Dandanqan, Bayhaqī complained that the nomads easily found desirable encampments with fodder, flowing streams and

22 Al-Faḥḥ ibn 'Alī Bundārī, *Histoire des Seldjoudes de L'Iraq, après Imād al-Dīn al-Kātib Al-Isfahānī*, ed. M. Th. Houtsma in *Recueil de textes relatifs à l'histoire des Seldjoudes*, Vol. 2 (Brill: Leiden, 1889), 5-8.

23 Ḥusaynī, *History of the Seljuq State*, 15.

24 *Ibid.*, 128.

25 'Izz al-Dīn Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fi al-Tārīkh*, ed. C.J. Tornberg (Leiden: Brill, 1868). Dandanqan appears in Vol. 5, 270, but his full account of the period is in Vol. 9, 314-32. Also see D.S. Richards (trans.), *The Annals of the Saljuq Turks: Selections from Al-Kāmil fi'l-Tārīkh of 'Izz al-Dīn ibn Al-Athīr* (London: Routledge, 2002), 38-40.

ice, while the Ghaznavids had no such luxury. Mas'ūd replied that the onerous weight of baggage consumed their energy and inhibited their mobility.<sup>26</sup> The chronicler emphasised the natural constraints on the army, while the commander asserted that supply shortages emerged directly from the transport and protection of the army's baggage, echoing the Seljuqs' assessment. Nomadic mobility enhanced adaptability to environmental conditions, while the sedentary army's impedimenta limited movement, which alone could precipitate a downfall. Chronic and acute absences of food, fodder and water did not stem directly from nature, but rather out of the necessity of maintaining military supplies.

The Seljuqs had a different relationship with their baggage. On the whole, they were less burdened than their enemies; yet, when on the move, they brought everyone and everything with them. Gardīzī notes that their migration into Khurasan included households of "men, women, children, possessions, sheep, camels, horses, and cattle".<sup>27</sup> When dwelling in a place, their extensive encampments (*khayyama*) were characteristic, whether they migrated for pasture or travelled for military or political purposes.<sup>28</sup> When they separated themselves from their baggage, they transformed from a tribal group to a warband; lightly provisioned, they could outrace their opponents even if they were typically unable to confront their settled enemies directly. This allowed the Seljuqs to stay one step ahead of the bulk of the Ghaznavid army, harrying its soldiers, escaping their grasp and setting traps.

An effective Seljuq strategy to take advantage of the scarcity of water was the proximate cause of their success. The Seljuqs diverted water channels away from the Ghaznavids, in addition to fouling wells and starting hot smoky fires. Prolonged dehydration and food deprivation have material consequences, in terms of their effects on physical health as well as military discipline; depending on individuals and circumstances, injurious and even fatal results can develop quickly. Two-humped Bactrian camels, plump with well-nourished humps, can endure up to a month without food and several weeks without water. Horses and elephants have a roughly similar capacity as humans to survive the absence of water and food; at a maximum, humans can live about a week without water and about three weeks without food. The Seljuqs consistently attempted to constrict their enemies' access to water, while the Ghaznavids focused primarily on its acquisition, not its denial to their

26 Bayhaqī, *Tārīkh-i Bayhaqī*, 771, *History of Beyhaqī*, Vol. 2, 266-7.

27 Gardīzī, *Tārīkh-i Gardīzī*, 411; *The Ornament of Histories*, 96.

28 D. Durand-Guédy, "The Tents of the Saljuqs," in D. Durand-Guédy (ed.), *Turko-Mongol Rulers, Cities and City Life* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 149-89.

opponents. The lack of water quickly bred resentment and rash action as well as strain on the army, constituting a form of psychological warfare. Nomadic mobility enabled a regular flow of moderate supplies of water and food, instead of relying on a massive continual stock of these resources, as was typically required by settled troops.

The composition of the armies, as well as their forms of leadership, shaped Seljuq and Ghaznavid motivations. The Seljuqs believed that their desert experience helped them develop superior physical and mental conditioning:

We are people of the waterless steppe and the ones who endure hardship. We can bear with patience the heat and cold, but he and his soldiers are not able to do so. They will only be able to do so for a while, then they will turn back.<sup>29</sup>

In contrast to the notion that nomadic peoples are more responsive to climatic conditions and vulnerable on the cold semi-arid steppe, the Seljuqs believed that the harshness of the desert made them stronger than their burdened opponents. The difference between Seljuq and Ghaznavid modes of warfare sits fundamentally along the nomadic–sedentary axis. Women and children often accompanied the nomads, unless left behind as before the battle of Dandanqan; otherwise, all able adult males were expected to fight. Despite the mixed combatant and non-combatant members of their host, the Seljuqs overall were more homogeneous ethnolinguistically with less social differentiation than their settled opponents. As for the Ghaznavids, their relatively more heterogeneous and differentiated troops consisted mainly of mercenaries, led by a singular monarch and his chains of dependents and clients.

By contrast, the Seljuqs possessed definable leaders and factions – yet councils, typically the basis for decision-making, could overrule older and nominally senior commanders. Perceived survival drove the early Seljuqs into battle at least as much as the desire for better pasturage and increased wealth. Despite the existence of rivalries, debate and coalitions predominated over orders and a strict chain of command, which proved potent at Dandanqan and elsewhere. The relatively greater equality of different Seljuq factions resulted in a more collective formulation of political will.

Comparisons can hide as much as they reveal. An abstract comparison of two dissimilar objects can add to our understanding of a phenomenon, but it can result merely in a new construct rather than in a more precise appreciation of a specific historical moment. Whether seen subjectively through the

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29 Bayhaqī, *Tārīkh-i Bayhaqī*, 766; *History of Beyhaqi*, Vol. 2, 261-2.

eyes of the participants, or assessed objectively in light of the collected evidence and the historical results of the battle, the lack of water at Dandanqan was real, but it affected both groups differently, becoming an element in military thought and action. Before addressing the question of climate change as a potential cause for scarcity during Dandanqan, we will compare two roughly analogous eleventh-century battles with alternative outcomes.

## 2 Somnath

Fifteen years earlier during the Ghaznavid campaign to Somnath, similar themes of baggage, water and men arose, this time in the hot semi-arid tropics of western India. The well-equipped Ghaznavids performed a singular raid on the port and temple town, returning heavy with spoils. The army's path southward along the Indus required crossing the southern edge of the Thar desert in Rajasthan before entering Gujarat and the cooler and moister lowlands of the peninsula of Saurashtra, where Somnath can be found at its tip on the edge of the ocean. This territory fell under the sway of the settled Chaulukya dynasty, along with its allies and clients, whose lands extended through Malwa to parts of modern-day Madhya Pradesh.

At the peak of their power under the leadership of Sultan Maḥmūd, the army left Ghazna in the autumn of 1025, reaching Multan after approximately three weeks.<sup>30</sup> After remaining at this station for more than two weeks, they prepared for the desert journey southward by securing two camels per soldier to carry water and adding an additional supply of 20,000 camels in reserve. In contrast to skirmishing with relatively impoverished steppe nomads, the hardships of the desert had opened a pathway to lucrative plunder. Fully provisioned, they set off, occasionally pausing for brief attacks on outposts along the way. Following a ridge on the edge of the desert, the troops reached the Chaulukya capital of Anahilavada, where the ruler fled before the Ghaznavids arrived, leaving them to replenish their supplies undisturbed. After a brief skirmish near Mudhera, the Ghaznavids were able to reach Delvada near Una, close to Somnath and its adjoining port of Veraval, which they entered at the start of 1026.

The Somnath campaign may have been the first time that many of the troops, including Punjabi Shaivites and the sultan himself, had seen the ocean. The commander of the fort near Somnath fled to a nearby island and would not return until the invaders left. The Ghaznavid army prepared for a siege,

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<sup>30</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fi al-Tārikh*, Vol. 9, 241.

which they conducted successfully within two days. While they stripped the temple and fort of its wealth, fires were set, either around the temple or the idol; the “idol” itself is poorly identified – it may have been either anthropomorphic or aniconic.<sup>31</sup> They monitored the coast with a swift guard to prevent the concentration of resistance from the sea, since some locals escaped the assault by climbing on boats.<sup>32</sup> Water remained integral to the Somnath campaign, whether it concerned troop supplies, riverine passage or manoeuvres at the coast.

After a fortnight's rest, the Ghaznavids began their march home. The Raja of Abu had gathered a force to challenge the raiders, which led the Ghaznavids to attempt a western route that passed through the shallow part of the sea in the Rann of Kutch. There was still enough fight in the Ghaznavids to sack the fort of Kanthkot, but subsequently the army was led astray by a treacherous guide into a waterless area, which proved difficult to escape. Finally entering Sindh, they waged an assault on Mansura, where an Isma'ili ruler purportedly lived. The Ghaznavids considered these Muslims in Sindh as their enemies and had frequently clashed with the local Isma'ili ruler, Dā'ūd.

Clearly, the Ghaznavids now controlled the area between Multan and Lahore, but little else on the Indus. Burdened with treasure and probably fearful of the potential for the rivers to flood, they were harried by local Jats, who managed to degrade the army, steal some baggage and exhaust the pack animals.<sup>33</sup> These Jats demonstrated the capacity of a mobile lightly armed force to successfully confront a much larger body of soldiers. Exhausted, the Ghaznavid army finally returned to Ghazni in the spring of 1026.

The assault on Somnath was successful and the loot substantial, but the arduous return journey along the Indus resulted in a significant loss of men and baggage. In the early spring of 1027, the Ghaznavids sought to recover their treasure from the Jats, who had taken refuge on islands in the Indus south of Multan. Battling the Jats on water, the Ghaznavids dispatched hundreds of boats fitted with spikes and manned by archers with incendiary missile weapons. The Ghaznavids systematically blocked the banks with elephants and

31 R. Thapar, *Somanatha: The Many Voices of a History* (London: Verso, 2005) provides an archaeological discussion on this problem. Also see G. Malagaris, “Firishta's Sultan Mahmud: On Beauty and Gold,” *Iran* (2018), 10.

32 Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fi al-Tārikh*, Vol. 9, 241. M. Nazim's account focuses on religious motivations for all parties and contains the hyperbole that “Hindu fanaticism was no match for Muslim valour and good generalship.” M. Nazim, *The Life and Times of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1931), 118.

33 Gardīzī, *Tārikh-i Gardīzī*, 412; *The Ornament of Histories*, 97.



horses, eventually overturning many Jat boats and recovering caches of valuables.

In terms of authors and texts, the poet Farrukhī (d. 1038) provides the earliest account, which may explain some of the poetic licence in subsequent retellings of the episode, although he was not present at the raid. Al-Birūnī was also absent, and he makes a few remarks but does not provide detail on the battle. Gardīzī's surviving chronicle is informative on the Somnath expedition, but he writes about twenty years after the events. The surviving volume of Bayhaqī's history does not much discuss the campaign, which he probably treated elsewhere in lost volumes, as he accompanied the army. Ibn Athīr's early thirteenth-century account contains some additional detail, reinforcing earlier sources and supplying some missing elements of the story. The most significant contemporaries for this episode remain Gardīzī and al-Birūnī – and to some extent, Farrukhī.

In Somnath and the vicinity, Sanskrit inscriptions from the period provide more context, but do not appear to contain specific information about this 1026 raid. The evidence shows records of Chaulukya land grants to local Hindu brahmins, Jainas, and others, along with clear mentions of hostilities between them and the Malwa-based Paramaras. Inscriptions also discuss temple donations, as well as taxes, tolls and related commercial matters. Under the Chaulukyas, road building and suppression of sea piracy secured the regular flow of goods and other traffic from the coast to the hinterlands, which the Ghaznavids did not appear to significantly disrupt. Oddly, a 1038 pilgrimage to Somnath by the Kadamba king in Goa does not mention the Ghaznavid raid.<sup>34</sup> Within a century afterward, Pashupata Shaiva priests had consolidated more power over a prosperous Somnath temple and regular complaints appear about neighbouring Malwa and Abhira rajas, who were accused of looting pilgrims and other attacks on travellers and temples. It appears that no mention has been made in inscriptional sources about the Ghaznavid campaign, which suggests that the Somnath temple was simply looted and desecrated, but not destroyed, and leaves the impression that the conflict did not have much immediate relevance.<sup>35</sup> This also points to a degree of rhetorical hyperbole in the Arabic and Persian sources, or at least different ideological conditions than the evidence from Sanskrit and other Middle Indic languages.

34 G. Moraes, *The Kadamba Kula: A History of Ancient and Medieval Karnataka* (Bombay: Furtado, 1931), 171.

35 See Thapar, *Somanatha*, 73-100 for further discussion of Hindu and Jain sources and the broader context. For the later period, see R.M. Eaton and P.B. Wagoner, *Power, Memory, Architecture: Contested Sites on India's Deccan Plateau, 1300-1600* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

The multifaceted reception of the Somnath campaign has greatly coloured our perception of the primary sources. After the expedition, Farrukhī sang Maḥmūd's praises in glowing terms. 'Aṭṭār (d. 1221) and Sa'dī (d. 1291) both wrote detailed lyrical accounts of the "idol" at Somnath. The fame of these poets ensured that the bowdlerised version became well known, although composed more than a century after the event. In addition, the exaggerated statements by Firishta (c. 1570-1623), which have been recirculated through European and especially British discourse, profoundly shaped our modern perceptions.<sup>36</sup> These court poets and chroniclers often had interests other than empirical fidelity. In contrast with Dandanqan, the reception of Somnath equals or exceeds that of Manzikert in terms of the number and variety of later retellings, many embellished with literary and rhetorical elements entirely unrelated to the original episode. This expedition became paradigmatic and has been cited as proof of religious motivations for Ghaznavid campaigns, in the Indo-Persian context and well before modern times.<sup>37</sup>

In fact, the Ghaznavid army arrived in Somnath at its most heterogeneous point, with numerous non-Muslim Indians in their ranks. Indians in particular had been present at least since the invasion of Sistan, nearly a quarter century earlier, when the first comments appear on Indian "infidel" troops in the Ghaznavid military. In the following generation, the quantity and quality of these Indian troops, regardless of their religious persuasion, had only increased. Some soldiers from India had "converted" to Islam after they lost to Ghaznavid troops, rajas guided the Ghaznavids across hilly country to defeat other neighbouring rajas and mahouts from the Indus had ridden the sultan's elephants into battle in Central Asia and Iran. These troops may have included former "Hindu" Shahi soldiers who had their own long-standing rivalry with the Chaulukyas. Non-Muslim Ghaznavid warriors from India had their own commander, their own quarter in Ghazni, and they appear to have continued with their religions.<sup>38</sup> A few top Ghaznavid commanders came from India, including "Suvendharay", who came to lead the Indian troops, as well as "Tilak" from Kashmir who rose to a very high military position. In short, the raid on Somnath by settled salaried troops was an "Indian" affair as much as a Central Asian or

36 Malagaris, "Firishta's Sultan Mahmud".

37 See S. Amin, *Conquest and Community: The Afterlife of Warrior Saint Ghazi Miyan* (New Delhi: Orient BlackSwan, 2015). A detailed discussion of the reception of the Somnath raid has been provided in Thapar, *Somanatha*, but the sheer mass of fictitious narratives requires separate study to be fully disentangled.

38 See C.E. Bosworth, *The Ghaznavids: Their Empire in Afghanistan and Eastern Iran 994-1040* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1963), 110; Thapar, *Somanatha*, 40.

Iranian one, and not a simplistic clash based on cultural difference or religious ideology.

The Somnath area had military significance. At the start of the eleventh century, Somnath was a temple and trade centre adjacent to Veraval, a major port on the Saurashtra peninsula and the westernmost accessible point for trade with the Gulf.<sup>39</sup> Unlike other major maritime trade areas in western India, Veraval did not have an extensive hinterland, which only intensified its economic and social connection with the western Indian Ocean. Indian exports included textiles, spices and precious stones, which were exchanged for imports of wine; metals; and, particularly, the boon of horses, vital for the successful conduct of state building and war.<sup>40</sup>

The Indian climate is not as favourable for the breeding of horses as it is for that of elephants; consequently, quality equines were imported in large quantities.<sup>41</sup> In the best conditions during the monsoon, a capable sailor could transport a horse shipment from Yemen to Gujarat in three weeks. Veraval was the only place in western India which grew *Acacia planifrons*, closely related to the *Acacia spirocarpa* of northeastern Africa and the Arabian peninsula, probably by accidental introduction in fodder for the masses of incoming horses.<sup>42</sup> A flow of these horses would have passed into Sindh and through Malwa, where they supplied the Ghaznavids' opponents. The Ghaznavids may have wanted Arabian horses for themselves just as much as they wished to deny them to their enemies. Yet as witnessed in many episodes, the Ghaznavids were also known for their attraction to war elephants, which spurred them into battle in places such as Thanesar. Elephants were often demanded as tribute; female ones were given as gifts to the Qarakhanid court. At any rate, a commercial port with wealthy temples trading in quality horses was a desirable target whose proximity to nearby fortresses and settlements provided opportunities for raids.

The Somnath clash occurred between settled powers, and the Ghaznavids emerged victorious. The presence of Turks in their army did not alone make them nomadic. There were mixed motivations for different types of soldiers;

39 The frequent silting of the Indus river delta makes it difficult to establish effective long-term ports.

40 S. Digby, "The Maritime Trade of India" in T. Raychaudhuri and I. Habib (eds), *The Cambridge Economic History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 125-59; and V.K. Jain, *Trade and Traders in Western India, AD 1000-1300* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1990), 90.

41 J. Gommans, "The Eurasian Frontier after the First Millennium AD: Reflections Along the Fringe of Time and Space," *Medieval History Journal* 1/1 (1998), 125-43.

42 Thapar, *Somanatha*, 31.

“volunteers” were relatively small in number and did not constitute the core troops.<sup>43</sup> Baggage both helped and hindered the Ghaznavids, supplying troops with equipment needed to survive the desert with adequate water and provisions but burdening their return with a long baggage train of loot, which exposed them to the predations of the Jats. The use of baggage and equipment could mitigate the rigours of the desert, yet it required advance preparation and good leadership, evident with Maḥmūd but not in the end with his son Mas‘ūd.<sup>44</sup> The evidence from Somnath also establishes that settled armies in arid climates do not automatically suffer from the desert conditions when they are properly equipped, organised and led.

### 3 Manzikert

Thirty years after their success at Dandanqan, the Seljuqs emerged the winners in another battle – this time against Byzantine forces at Manzikert in late August 1071. This late-summer battle probably took place in the steppe several miles south of Manzikert.<sup>45</sup> Alp Arslan (d. 1072), nephew of Ṭughrl and sultan of Iran and Iraq, defeated the settled forces of the recently elevated emperor Romanos IV Diogenes (d. 1072).

Constant plotting in Constantinople had delayed the emperor’s departure to confront the eastern threat. In particular, Romanos wished to retake the Armenian fortresses of Manzikert and Akhlat. In the spring of 1071, he left Constantinople towards Sivas, with a large army bearing lavish impedimenta and baggage.<sup>46</sup> The army consisted mainly of nobles and many foreign mercenaries including Normans; Franks; Slavs; Armenians; Georgians; and Turks, among them Oghuz, Pechenegs and Cumans from southern Russia. The emperor had inherited an army heavily recruited from mercenaries (*misthoforikón*) outside the empire, on the theory that their presence prevented commanders from creating rival factions.

43 For a discussion of elements of the army, see C.E. Bosworth, “The Army of the Ghaznavids,” in J.J.L. Gommans and D.H.A. Kolff (eds), *Warfare and Weaponry in South Asia 1000-1800* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001) and C.E. Bosworth, “Ghaznevid Military Organisation,” *Der Islam* 36 (1960), 37-77.

44 Ghaznavid commanders mention the necessity of desert equipment (*ālat-i bīyābān*) to avoid disasters while pursuing the Seljuqs into the steppe. See Bayhaqī, *Tārīkh-i Bayhaqī*, 764; *History of Beyhaqi*, Vol. 2, 260.

45 The exact day differs depending upon the source.

46 The extent of baggage was noted by Christian and Muslim authors alike.

Some top Byzantine generals disagreed with his strategy towards the nomads. Nikephoros Bryennios and Ioseph Trachaneiotos preferred to wait within the protection of Byzantium's borders, and had effectively abandoned fortresses in the frontier areas inhabited by Armenians. The other faction, constituted by Armenian leaders, preferred to go beyond the frontiers and destroy enemy forces before they crossed over into Byzantine territory. Romanos had much support from men within Asia Minor and solicited assistance from the Armenians. Strong Byzantine defences against Arabs coming from Syria and southern Armenia had not been developed to the same degree as in the Caucasus, which left cities in that area relatively vulnerable. The cold windswept eastern plateau was relatively unsuitable for settled agriculture and difficult for armies to sustain their supplies. Byzantine defence of the area consisted of garrisons at strategically established fortresses, which worked in liaison with the field army.

During the march eastwards, Romanos had to confront his own mercenaries, who were excessively ravaging the countryside, and aimed to preserve crops so that locals would not hide food and cause a dangerous scarcity for the army. They stopped at Artze, near the abandoned settlement of Theodosioupolis, to draw upon this regional centre which abounded in products from "Persia, India, and the rest of Asia", where the emperor ordered the gathering of two months of provisions for travel through the relatively uninhabited frontier.<sup>47</sup> The emperor divided his forces to prepare the siege on Akhlat while he proceeded with his own force to Manzikert, where he was determined to succeed quickly – which he did, soon installing a Byzantine general. A series of preliminary skirmishes with a group of Seljuqs disrupted Byzantine foraging, disputes arose among the Byzantine commanders and night-time harassment during the purchase of supplies frightened a portion of Oghuz mercenaries into defecting to the Seljuqs.<sup>48</sup> When the Seljuqs attempted to divert the nearby river, another group of Turks left the Byzantines; yet, the Byzantines retained control of the water, which may have been a factor in the brief moment

47 M. Attaleiates, *The History*, ed. and trans. A. Kaldellis, and D. Krallis (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), 269-70. For an analysis of this campaign's logistics, see J.F. Haldon, *General Issues in the Study of Medieval Logistics: Sources, Problems, and Methodologies* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 8-18; and for logistics across a variety of texts, see J.F. Haldon, *The Byzantine Wars: Battles and Campaigns of the Byzantine Era* (Stroud: Tempus, 2001), 126-9.

48 Greek sources call Oghuz "Ouzoi". Oghuz and Pechenegs, also called Skythians in Attaleiates, come from a nomadic Turkic background and joined the Seljuqs in the course of battle, as attested in Byzantine and Christian sources but neglected by Muslim ones; see C. Hillenbrand, *Turkish Myth and Muslim Symbol: The Battle of Manzikert* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), 15.

of rapprochement between the combatants before the battle recommenced.<sup>49</sup> These mercenaries may have been unreliable, but they were not the most dangerous foes.

Possibly misled by his generals, the emperor misinterpreted the strength of the enemy and was caught unawares when the sultan returned to Manzikert. The Byzantine forces headed for Akhlat, led by Ioseph Trachaneiotēs, and the Latin mercenary Roussel de Bailleul – accompanied by a number of Franks, Oghuz and Byzantine troops – had also quietly escaped upon hearing of the sultan's arrival, fleeing across Byzantine Mesopotamia to Anatolia.<sup>50</sup> Latin mercenaries were considered more troublesome than the Turks and often proved so meddlesome to the Byzantines that they preferred the Turks to occupy some areas rather than the Latins. Unaware of these defections, Romanos perceived an opportunity to confront the nomads directly rather than chasing them, as they characteristically split into small rapid-attack units if pursued. Turkic tactics involved the use of horsemen armed with arrows and capable of striking the enemy while retreating from range; nevertheless, manoeuvrability and archery alone were insufficient when the Byzantines massed.

The Byzantines arranged themselves in a dense rectangle (*phálanga*) and the Seljuqs positioned themselves in a semicircle in front of them.<sup>51</sup> After the fighting intensified, the Seljuqs feigned a retreat to draw the Byzantines soldiers forward. As their line extended, the Seljuqs outflanked them with swift cavalry in an attempt to penetrate their mass. As night approached, Romanos decided to stage a retreat to the camp, but when the imperial standard turned, the troops misinterpreted the emperor's intentions as a sign of a rout. The treacherous commander of the rearguard, Andronikos of the rival Doukas family, deserted the emperor and spread the rumour, perhaps in a premeditated plot, that the emperor had been defeated. The disorder opened an opportunity for the Seljuqs to flank the army on all sides and divide it into smaller pockets. Romanos turned his forces around to confront the Seljuqs, but it was too late; although fighting valiantly, the emperor himself was captured, imprisoned and brought before the sultan. Byzantine sources note the restraint of Alp Arslan, who did not harm Romanos and concluded a treaty, no doubt aware that the

49 See S. Vryonis, "The Battles of Manzikert (1071) and Myriocephalum (1176). Notes on Food, Water, Archery, Ethnic Identity of Foe and Ally," *Mésogeios* 25-6 (2005), 59 for this battle in the context of Myriocephalum and Byzantine military manuals.

50 Matthew of Edessa, Aristakes and Michael the Syrian all confirm these defections. Also see S. Vryonis, *The Decline of Medieval Hellenism in Asia Minor and the Process of Islamization from the Eleventh through the Fifteenth Century* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1986), 99-101.

51 On the battle formation, see Hillenbrand, *Turkish Myth and Muslim Symbol*, 10-13.

Byzantine army had been dispersed but not destroyed.<sup>52</sup> Freed after a week, the emperor received news from Constantinople that Michael VII Doukas had usurped his position and had been proclaimed emperor.

Civil war rocked Byzantium, which was bedevilled by crisis throughout the eleventh century as it contended with the Norman conquest of Bari in 1071 and Pecheneg raiders in its north. During a decade-long power struggle, Romanos was eventually captured by his domestic enemies, tortured by blinding and murdered in 1072. Alp Arslan moved eastwards in an attempt to suppress discontent and was killed himself that same year, never returning to Anatolia. Although the death of Romanos nullified the treaty, the Seljuqs did not immediately follow up on their accidental victory over a demoralised and exposed Anatolia. Indeed, the many years of civil war proved far more damaging to Byzantium than the battle itself, according to contemporaneous sources. Turkification and Islamisation in Anatolia was a gradual and incomplete process that took centuries, and emerged from additional causes than the result of Manzikert alone.

The Byzantine historiography of Manzikert split between those favourable to Romanos and those opposed to him. The most valuable Greek account comes from the eyewitness Michael Attaleiates, “judge of the army” and advisor to the emperor, who navigated the intrigue and civil war after the battle. Sympathetic towards Romanos, he narrates the campaign and brutal aftermath, along with the betrayals, incompetence, and misfortunes which befell the Byzantines and their leader.<sup>53</sup> His viewpoint was echoed in the history of Skylitzes and the twelfth-century account of Zonaras.<sup>54</sup> Critics of Romanos include Psellos, a tutor to Michael VII Doukas who usurped the throne from Romanos, as well as Nikephoros Bryennios, son or grandson of the general at Manzikert with

52 Potentially only 10% of the Byzantine army had been lost, especially from the Armenian infantry and the emperor’s personal guard, while individual detachments, although capable militarily in their own right, were uncoordinated during the tumult of civil war. See J.-C. Cheynet, “Mantzikert: un désastre militaire?” *Byzantion* 50 (1980), 410-38.

53 Michael Attaleiates, *Historia*, ed. I. Bekker (Bonn: Impensis Ed. Weberi, 1853), 151-66. The Manzikert section of Attaleiates was translated by R. Macrides in Hillenbrand, *Turkish Myth and Muslim Symbol*, 227-37. Also see Attaleiates, *The History*, trans. A. Kaldellis, and D. Krallis, 261-303.

54 Zonaras, *Ioannis Zonaras epitomae historiarum*, ed. T. Büttner-Wobst in *Corpus scriptorum historiae byzantinae* (Bonn: E. Weber, 1897), 696-703. Skylitzes, *Ioannes Skylitzes continuatus*, ed. E.T. Tsolakes (Thessalonika: Etaireia Makedonikōn Spoudōn, 1968). Matthew of Edessa can be included in this group, but he mistakes some details; see Vryonis, *Decline of Medieval Hellenism*, 100-1.

the same name.<sup>55</sup> As author of the main counter-narrative, Bryennios extolls the defensive thinking of his ancestor, emphasises his loyalty and virtue, and chastises the emperor for listening to flattery. Although Attaleiates wrote an apology of the emperor and Bryennios penned a criticism, both accounts agree on the sequence of the main events, with the more detail to be found in Attaleiates. In addition to comments on the battle from Armenian and Syriac sources, Muslim sources in Arabic and Persian retell the events. Early sources such as Bundārī and Ibn al-‘Adīm (d. 1262) confirm elements of the Greek accounts, such as the ambushes, while they elide defections to the Seljuqs and typically portray the piety of Alp Arslan. Later versions reveal more about the memory of Manzikert and its embellishment than the events themselves.<sup>56</sup>

Internal Byzantine dynamics led to the failure of Romanos’s policy to defend Anatolia’s frontiers against the Seljuqs and other nomads.<sup>57</sup> Treacherous commanders and tensions between the foreign mercenaries and local Byzantine troops substantially contributed to the defeat. The departing Byzantine contingent had been unusually large with heavy baggage, while the Seljuqs may only have had a horse and spare mount for each soldier. Dividing the army made sound strategic sense as an attempt to capture multiple fortresses, provided that settled forces remained coordinated and the nomads were not close; yet in the battle itself, the diminished Byzantines suffered greatly from desertions and defections. Romanos had misperceived Alp Arslan, who wished to focus his raiding energy on the Fatimids in Syria rather than the Byzantines in Anatolia, and who had his own difficulties paying for his soldiers. The Seljuqs still retained the traditional dispersed power arrangements of the steppe, while increasingly adding an element of Persian and Islamic statecraft during the course of their governance of settled populations. The Byzantines, however, continued to rely on a chain of command based on the orders of the

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55 N. Bryennios, *Histoire*, trans. P. Gautier (Brussels: Byzantion, 1975), 104-20. Vryonis prefers Attaleiates over Cahen’s preference for Bryennios in C. Cahen, “La campagne de Manzikert d’après les sources Musulmanes,” *Byzantion* 9/2 (1934), 613-42.

56 Sources describing a horrific invasion in the 1050s and 1060s were composed after the battle of Manzikert, and suggest that although these incursions were significant many did not directly experience these raids and did not realise the extent of the new raiders’ presence and ambitions. For Muslim sources and the foundational myth of Manzikert, see Hillenbrand, *Turkish Myth and Muslim Symbol*.

57 See Cheynet, “Manzikert: un désastre militaire?” and Vryonis, “The Battles of Manzikert and Myrioccephalum,” 67, who maintains that “treachery, and not archery, had been the primary cause of defeat ...”. A. Beihammer notes the ideological significance of the battle and embeds these events in the broader framework of upheavals in Anatolia, in A. Beihammer, *Byzantium and the Emergence of Muslim-Turkish Anatolia, ca. 1040* (London: Routledge, 2017), 155-68.



singular authority of the emperor. While food was a regular concern, there appears to be only one brief moment of water scarcity, when the Seljuqs diverted the river, a minor incident in the face of Byzantine military and political disunity. The environment does not appear to have played a crucial role in the outcome of the battle.

#### 4 Climate and Conflict

In each of these eleventh-century battles, scarcity of water and food could be deemed to have played a strong, middling or weak role. At Dandanqan, water became the trigger for the devastating loss of military discipline. In the case of Somnath, preparation and equipment helped the raiders overcome the arid conditions of the Rajasthani desert, enabling the settled army to largely evade its difficulties. At Manzikert, soldiers showed concern with provisions and water – but scarcity as such appears briefly, with only a minor-to-negligible effect on the result. Accordingly, it is worthwhile considering the effects of environmental factors in shaping these violent conflicts.

Climate history across medieval Eurasia has been unevenly studied for the regions of these three battles, which increases the challenge of ascertaining natural environmental causes. The climate in the steppe around the Aral sea became cooler and drier during 900–1200, only moistening and warming by the thirteenth century; there was no sudden drop of winter temperatures, which hovered around  $-8^{\circ}\text{C}$ , but summers cooled with mean temperatures between  $22^{\circ}\text{C}$  and  $16^{\circ}\text{C}$ .<sup>58</sup> While arid conditions increased in the region, there were no extreme alternations nor did they exceed current levels; presently, the area around Dandanqan is classified as a cold desert climate with hot dry summers and cold dry winters.<sup>59</sup> Archaeological observations of Dandanqan, a small settlement with wells and a central canal along the route between Merv and Sarakhs, suggest greater fertility in the ninth–twelfth centuries than today.<sup>60</sup> As we have seen, scarcity afflicted both sides, although typically the settled

58 See J. Paul, “Nomads and Bukhara. A Study in Nomad Migrations, Pasture, and Climate Change (11th century CE),” *Der Islam* 93/2 (2016), 530.

59 M. Kottek, et al. “World Map of the Köppen-Geiger Climate Classification Updated,” *Meteorologische Zeitschrift* 15/3 (2006), 259–63.

60 P. Wordsworth, “Merv on Khorasanian trade routes from the 10th–13th centuries,” in R. Rante (ed.), *Greater Khorasan: History, Geography, Archaeology and Material Culture* (Boston, MA: Walter de Gruyter, 2015), 53–4. B. Zahoder, “Dandanekan,” *Istoricheskii Zhurnal* 3–4 (1943), 74–7 appears to be the earliest description of the site, but it is not a full survey and does not give much information on the battle.

troops encountered greater difficulty locating water than the nomads, and all were aware of these facts.<sup>61</sup> Famine was no doubt exacerbated, if not caused, by Seljuq raids and the extended stay of the Ghaznavid army in the area. On this basis, natural causes for the drought during the battle appear to be temporary and mitigable rather than evidence of a systemic and determining climate change. The primary causes for Ghaznavid defeat can be sought elsewhere.

The route to Somnath lies through hot arid and semi-arid climates, which tended towards hot summers and warm-to-cool winters, depending on annual precipitation and temperature.<sup>62</sup> During the eighth–tenth centuries, the Indian subcontinent witnessed a decline in monsoon precipitation with long periods of less rain. Habitation concentrated in eastern and southern Rajasthan until the seventh century. The tripartite struggle between the Pratiharas, Palas and Rashtrakutas peaked during the ninth century and resulted in the appearance of new local rulers, which correlated with the expansion into agriculturally marginal areas of the Thar desert and increased use of irrigation and rainwater-storage systems to adapt to periodic drought.<sup>63</sup> Increased settlement probably supplied some of the commodities and markets for goods passing through the port of Veraval next to Somnath. The Ghaznavids took some risk to reach the Somnath area by traversing the Thar along the salt desert of the Rann of Kutch; nevertheless, this region's climate on the whole is moister than that of Central Asia.<sup>64</sup> In the vicinity of a confluence of three rivers, Somnath supported the growth of a Pashupata Shaiva pilgrimage site by the tenth century, based on inscriptions.<sup>65</sup> The Gujarati peninsula may be the least well-studied of the three regions in terms of climate change, but in light of the other factors

61 Bosworth, *The Ghaznavids*, 222–3 dismissed the role of climatic change in explaining Oghuz-Seljuq migrations – as did P. Christensen, *The Decline of Iranshahr: Irrigation and Environment in the Middle East, 500 BC–AD 1500* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2016), 10–11. Paul, “Nomads and Bukhara” does not believe that there is evidence of a dramatic cooling in Transoxiana or that famine pushed nomads into the eastern Mediterranean, *pace* R. Bulliet, *Cotton, Climate, and Camels in Early Islamic Iran: A Moment in World History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009) and R. Ellenblum, *The Collapse of the Eastern Mediterranean: Climate Change and the Decline of the East, 950–1072* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), respectively.

62 See Kottek, et al., “World Map”.

63 See M. Kumar, “Adaptations to Climatic Variability: Irrigation and Settlement Patterns in Early Medieval Rajasthan,” *Medieval History Journal* 17/1 (2014), 57–86.

64 There does not appear to be a correlation between climate data from Central Asia and South Asia because of an “out-of-phase or even anti-phase relationship”, according to Chen, et al., “Moisture Changes over the Last Millennium in Arid Central Asia: A Review, Synthesis and Comparison with Monsoon Region,” *Quaternary Science Reviews* 29/7 (2010), 1068.

65 Based on a Chedi inscription, see Thapar, *Somanatha*, 24.

mentioned climatic factors may not have been relevant to the outcome of this particular conflict. Indeed, the greatest danger to the Ghaznavids arose on the return trip through enemy territory in the middle Indus and away from the desert, while they were burdened with loot-laden baggage.

Out of the three regions, Anatolia may have the most developed scholarship on climate. Water can be a significant factor in battles in central and eastern Anatolia, but it does not seem to have been the case for Manzikert itself.<sup>66</sup> The Medieval Climate Anomaly postulates a warming period between 850-1300, based on the study of terrestrial and marine palaeoclimatic proxies, such as ice-cap- and groundwater-recharge records, the collection of which have become abundant for the western and central Mediterranean but less so for its eastern region. Anatolia appears markedly drier than this in the period leading up to Manzikert, but the decline in cereal production over the area appears to have had human as much as natural causes.<sup>67</sup> While climate change may have increased agricultural vulnerability somewhat, it did not affect the underlying resiliency of settled Byzantine society despite the many challenges of the eleventh-century crisis, which brought incursions by Seljuqs in Anatolia, Pechenegs in the Balkans and Normans in Italy. If resiliency applies to settled Byzantine society, then perhaps adaptability serves a similar function for Seljuq nomads; both notions suggest agency and resistance to environmental change, which in any event was not so significant as to alter their fundamental political behaviours and social organisation.<sup>68</sup>

A region is determined by more than its environmental conditions, whether found in climate change or the fluctuations of weather. As a form of causation, strong emphasis on the natural environment tends to concentrate on the economics of the supply of water over that of demand, which may indicate a settled perspective on these matters, and also to prioritise structure over agency in terms of social and historical change. The necessity of food and water for the military determined the relative scarcity or abundance of the environment. When different military actors confront the same environmental conditions, in one sense the effect of nature is neutral while the human response becomes paramount. The absence of environmental determinism has to be

66 For instance, during the battle of Ankara (1402) between Temür's forces and the Ottomans, the Ottomans lost due to its absence as their mercenaries abandoned them.

67 E. Xoplaki, et al. "The Medieval Climate Anomaly and Byzantium: A Review of the Evidence on Climatic Fluctuations, Economic Performance and Societal Change," *Quaternary Science Reviews* 30 (2015), 1-24.

68 For the concept of resilience, see J. Haldon and A. Rosen, "Society and Environment in the East Mediterranean ca 300-1800 CE. Problems of Resilience, Adaptation and Transformation. Introductory Essay," *Human Ecology* 46/3 (2018), 275-90.

demonstrated within the content of an argument, rather than abstractly asserted as a caveat.

Climate change does not appear to have played a significant role in the eleventh-century battles of Dandanqan, Somnath and Manzikert, although water or food shortages may have affected sedentary forces more than nomads, who were accustomed to a leaner existence and did not require as much baggage to conduct war. In other Central Asian cases, the fall of the eastern Turk empire (c. 584-630) may have been due only indirectly to climate perturbation, which must be interpreted within a comprehensive political analysis.<sup>69</sup> As for the Uyghur empire (c. 744-840), sedentary habits and ineffective leadership undermined their army in the struggle with the Kirgiz more than did climate stress.<sup>70</sup> There is a hoary tendency to presuppose that nomads, whether Turks or not, have an inherently primitive disposition more susceptible to environmental change. Yet the significance of nature may be limited in comparison with the human factor, which can overcome natural obstacles through action.

## 5 Conclusion

The dynamics of men and their baggage appear to be more significant than water scarcity in these eleventh-century conflicts between nomadic and settled forces, who inhabited starkly different political economies. The factors of water, climate and environment, although not entirely a mirage, appear to have a moderate to negligible effect on the battles in terms of cause and results. Across all three battles, constants included the motivations of the soldiers and their fraught relationship with their property, whether fixed or portable, which could help or hinder their aims. Military archaeology joined with the textual scholarship would reveal more about these varied spaces and objects of contestation.

Settled and increasingly mercenary armies became vulnerable to motivated nomads during the eleventh century. Although settled forces did fare well

69 N. Di Cosmo, C. Oppenheimer, and U. Büntgen, "Interplay of Environmental and Socio-Political Factors in the Downfall of the Eastern Türk Empire in 630 CE," *Climatic Change* 145/3 (2017), 383-95.

70 "Once we account for socio-economic complexity, the case of the Uyghur Empire belies the general assumption that nomadic peoples are more vulnerable to climatic stress. The severe and protracted drought did not trigger migration, pillaging, or conquest." See N. Di Cosmo, et al., "Environmental Stress and Steppe Nomads: Rethinking the History of the Uyghur Empire (744-840) with Paleoclimate Data," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 48/4 (2018), 439-63.

against other settled opponents, as during the Somnath campaign, after both Dandanqan and Manzikert the defeated settled polities descended into civil war that lasted a decade each, resulting in enormous turmoil within their societies, the deaths of Mas'ūd and Romanos, and the further exposure of their erstwhile territories to nomadic incursions. Leadership may be less important than the political and social organisation of the military. Although both leaders were personally valiant, Mas'ūd proved a less capable commander than Romanos, whose weaknesses emerged from political causes; yet both were defeated in the end. The nomadic Seljuqs developed multiple centres of power arranged in a coherent structure while the militaries of the settled Ghaznavids and Byzantines, despite the great difference between their histories, both tended towards a singular centre of power with many discrete parts.

All three of these battles involved Turkic combatants, whether as part of settled or nomadic forces. Although the Ghaznavids were more heterogeneous than the Seljuqs, the substantial presence of Turkic Muslim soldiers on both sides mitigates the basis for describing Dandanqan in ethnic and religious terms; indeed, a functional Turko-Iranian state emerged soon after the battle.<sup>71</sup> The Ghaznavids promoted a raid on Somnath on ideological grounds, but in practice the pragmatic motives of a mixed army predominated over a strictly Turk–Indian, Hindu–Muslim or Muslim–Muslim clash. At Manzikert, Byzantine Greeks employed Turkic peoples at the same time that they fought against them, with scant regard for Christianity or Islam on all sides when actual combat started. The subsequent history of reception has greatly coloured our perception of these battles, particularly when seen through the lenses of nationalist, communalist, ethnic or religious conflict. Yet each battle has elements that preclude facile and anachronistic categorisation.

In a global and comparative perspective, causation in these political and military histories resides primarily in human action rather than environmental conditions, which may pertain mainly to the *longue durée*.<sup>72</sup> The social organisation of the base and leadership of armies are concrete structures formed out of persistent behaviours and expectations, which fell apart dramatically during eleventh-century defeats on the steppe. Indeed, these collapses expose the underlying source for political loyalty and military discipline: the continuing act of its creation or destruction.

71 D. Durand-Guédy, "New Trends in the Political History of Iran under the Great Saljuqs (11th–12th Centuries)," *History Compass* 13/7 (2015), 327.

72 There are justifiable concerns about the scientifically demonstrated and real current climate change due to human fossil-fuel consumption.

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# Turks, Turks and türk Turks: Anatolia, Iran and India in Comparative Perspective

*Stephen Frederic Dale*

The arrival of Turks in western Eurasia represents one of the major world-historical events during the more than half a millennium that stretched from the ninth to the sixteenth centuries. This process witnessed three distinct and overlapping processes. First, it began with the Turkification of the formerly Soghdian lands in Mawarannahr (Transoxiana), due initially to the migrations of Qarakhanids and the Oghuz, whose dispersal and influence Maḥmūd al-Kāshgharī celebrated in his late eleventh-century work the *Dīwān Lughāt al-Turk*.<sup>1</sup> Following the Qarakhanids and Oghuz, the Qara Khitai and subsequently the Mongols and their many Turkic troops largely completed the Turkification of this western Central Asian region in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Second, from the ninth century onwards, the presence of large numbers of nomadic or semi-nomadic Turks on the frontiers of the Abbasid caliphate led to the development of Turkic military slavery, as Abbasids converted young Turkic slaves to Islam and trained them to provide the caliphate with loyal, professional military forces known as *ghulāms* or *mamlūks*. By the tenth century, detachments of these troops had become power brokers both within Baghdad and also in some Abbasid provinces, where *ghulāms* exploited the regiments they commanded to become autonomous or independent sultans – as they did in Ghazna in eastern Afghanistan in the tenth century, Khwarazm in the late eleventh century and Delhi in the thirteenth century.<sup>2</sup> Third, the migration of

1 Peter B. Golden, “The Turkic World in Maḥmūd al-Kāshgharī,” in Jan Bemmam and Michael Schmauder (eds), *Complexity of Interaction along the Eurasian Steppe Zone in the First Millennium CE* (Bonn: Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität 2005), 503–55. Kāshgharī is notable for his anti-Iranian sentiments and condescending remarks about Oghuz who had become tainted with Persian linguistic influence, 520 and 524. Regarding the origin of Turks and the later identity of Turks in Chinggisid and Timurid times, see Peter B. Golden, “Ethnogenesis in the Tribal Zone: The Shaping of the Turks,” *Archivum Eurasiae Medii Aevi* 16 (2008/09), 73–112; and Joo-Yup Lee, “The Historical Meaning of the Term *Turk* and the Nature of the Turkic Identity of the Chinggisid and Timurid Elites in Post-Mongol Central Asia,” *Central Asiatic Journal* 59/1–2 (2016), 101–32.

2 These eastern *ghulam* sultanates were ethnically Turkic. The Mamluks of Egypt (1250–1517) were a complex mixture of ethnicities.

Ghuzz or Oghuz Turks from Mawarannahr into the Iranian plateau in the tenth and eleventh centuries and the conquests of the Seljuq-led Oghuz in Iran and Anatolia represented the final phase of this Turkification process. By the thirteenth century, Turkic rulers, *ghulāms* or Oghuz, controlled territory that extended from Mawarannahr and northern India to western Anatolia.

Yet the presence of ethnically distinct Turkic communities and the political power of identifiably Turkic dynasties varied markedly in these regions during the succeeding centuries. In Hindustan from the tenth to the sixteenth century the majority of Turks were members of a *ghulām*-dominated military class, and their descendants faded almost to invisibility there by 1600. In Iran, where tens or hundreds of thousands of Oghuz Turks settled, they never established an identifiably Turkic state over the plateau, even as Turkic or Qizilbash tribes dominated the Safavid military, formed an ethnic presence in Azerbaijan and remained prominent as tribesmen speaking Turkic dialects down to the twentieth century. Despite the massive and continuous Turkic presence, Persian and Iranian culture has remained culturally dominant in Iran throughout its Islamic history. In contrast, at the western or Anatolian end of this region of Turkic involvement not only did Oghuz invaders retain their political power to varying degrees, but Turks also became the ethnically dominant population, speaking Turkic dialects and generating Turkic rural and urban cultures.

Before considering the assimilation – or triumph – of Turks in each of these three areas it is important, briefly at least, to consider a number of issues associated with this subject: first, how to identify Turks; second, how to define assimilation; and third how to measure this process in pre-modern eras. A name originally derived from the Kōk Turks in the sixth century, many Muslim authors later applied the word “Turk” to steppe peoples generally, while others associated it specifically with steppe peoples who spoke a common language.<sup>3</sup> Some authors also identified specific physical traits with peoples they identified as Turks, as did Kaykā’ūs, the author of the eleventh-century *naṣīhat-nāma*, or “Mirror for Princes”, text the *Qābūs-nāma*.<sup>4</sup> However, Maḥmud al-Kāshgharī identified language “as a key component of Turkic identity” found among the panoply of tribes, sub-tribes and clans of his era.<sup>5</sup> Taking the complexity of tribal identity into account, and considering how physical features

3 Lee, “Historical Meaning of the term *Turk*,” 103-4; Golden, “Turkic World,” 506-7.

4 Cited by Lee, “Historical Meaning of the term *Turk*,” 112. Visitors to Samarqand and other cities in Mawarannahr often make casual distinctions between Iranians and Turks based on perceived physical types, as the author found himself almost unconsciously doing during trips to Samarqand.

5 Golden, “Turkic World,” 520.

are blurred or lost with intermarriage, language is probably the best general marker of ethnicity.

The loss of language or, in the case of ruling lineages, the dropping of Turkic names and the appropriation of Arabic or Persian-language regnal titles are two of the most obvious markers of assimilation. In terms of language, the tenth- and eleventh-century Central Asian case of the Iranian language Soghdian being overwhelmed by Turkish is one such example of the assimilation of an entire population.<sup>6</sup> A second example is the gradual disappearance of Greek as a spoken language throughout most of Anatolia following the Oghuz migrations/invasions. Regarding dynastic examples, Ghaznavid, Seljuq and Delhi sultanate rulers' appropriation of Persian and Arabic/Muslim names exemplified the second phenomenon of Turkic rulers' assimilation of Perso-Islamic culture.<sup>7</sup> The disappearance of linguistically defined Turkic ethnic groups from the historical record and the instances of Turkic ruling lineages adopting Perso-Islamic names and titles is often one of the only ways to detect assimilation in eras when few historical sources provide record information about racial or ethnic types. In fact, there are few sources for any of these three regions – India, Iran or Anatolia – which provide the data that social scientists now use – or contest – when discussing assimilation of distinct ethnicities.<sup>8</sup>

## 1 Afghanistan and Hindustan

It was the Turkification of Mawarannahr and the development of the *ghulām* institution that began what became a limited Turkification of Afghanistan and Hindustan between the tenth and fifteenth centuries. In this case, as in other regions, the size of the Turkic population, their military strength and political power, and the sophistication of their cultural environment all influenced the outcome.<sup>9</sup> At roughly the same time, Turkish *ghulāms* rose to power as military

6 Ibid., 525.

7 In the Ghaznavid case Turkic dynastic names – Alptegin, Sebüktegin – first gave way to Arabic – Maḥmūd, Ibrāhīm and Mas'ūd – and then finally to Persian – Bahrām Shāh.

8 The Norwegian anthropologist Fredrik Barth's work stimulated an entire scholarly enterprise devoted to discussing these contentious issues. See especially his edited work, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries* (New York: Little Brown, 1969).

9 For an attempt to survey Turkic influence in India, see Ismail K. Poonawala (ed.), *Turks in the Indian Subcontinent, Central and West Asia* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2017) and Haila Abdurrahman Al-Sahli, "Turks in India: Their Presence and Contribution to Islam and Analytical Study," *West-East Journal of Social Sciences* 2/2 (2013), 36–46. The latter author emphasises the role of Turkic conquerors, rulers and administrators, but when examining cultural influences she, like other authors, stresses the dominant influence of Iranians and Persian culture in the subcontinent.

contingents in Baghdad and *ghulāms* from the Iranian Samanid dynasty of Bukhara (819-999) founded an entirely new state in Ghazna, a frigid mountainous region half a day's march southeast of Kabul. Samanid rulers were geographically well situated to purchase young Turks in the Central Asian slave markets, and in 962 one of their *ghulam* commanders – Alptegin, the Turkic “Hero-Prince” – backed the wrong side in a succession struggle and fled with his troops to the Samanid fortress at Ghazna. There he initially ruled as a Samanid governor, but gradually succeeded in establishing an autonomous Turkish military oligarchy, which soon evolved into a formidable state: the military sultanate in its purest – that is, its proto-Iranian imperial form. Alptegin's son-in-law Sebüktegin, “Beloved Prince”, succeeded him in 993, and he expanded Ghaznavid authority to both eastern Afghanistan and Khurasan. He founded a dynasty when his son Maḥmūd succeeded him in 998, following a brief war of succession.

Maḥmūd's career and his state exemplified the process of Turkic assimilation to the Perso-Islamic world that became commonplace later in India during the Sultanate era from 1206 to 1398, and which by his actions he did much to foster. While presiding over a centralised, Turkic-dominated military despotism, he legitimised himself politically and culturally in the eastern Islamic world. He presented himself as an observant Muslim, who also patronised the literary and artistic Iranian culture that Samanid rulers had been instrumental in resuscitating in the period between the decay of the Abbasid Caliphate and the Turkic and Mongol invasions that Vladimir Minorsky once gracefully characterised as the “Persian Intermezzo”.<sup>10</sup>

Maḥmūd began this process of legitimisation – and assimilation – by taking a Muslim dynastic name, a recurring phenomenon as Turks moved into the sedentary Muslim world. As his campaigns succeeded, he also claimed to be representative of the Sunni Abbasid caliph, and he presented himself on his coins and elsewhere as a *ghāzī*, a Muslim frontier warrior, as he staged predatory raids on wealthy India to further his conquests in Khurasan. Additionally he looked to please the literati of the eastern Islamic world by patronising high Perso-Islamic culture, attracting or coercing prestigious scholars and literati to attend his court – including two of the greatest Iranians of this time, the scientist Abū'l-Rayḥān Aḥmad al-Bīrūnī (973-1052) and the poet Abū'l-Qāsim Firdawsī (c. 940-1020), the author of the Iranian epic poem the *Shāhnāma*. At

<sup>10</sup> Vladimir Minorsky, “La domination des Dailamites,” in *Publications de la Société des Études Iraniennes* III, Paris (1932), 21. The Japanese scholar Masashi Haneda discusses the Iranian–Indian connection in his brief but thoughtful article “Emigration of Iranian Elites to India during the 16th-18th centuries,” *Cahiers d'Asie centrale* 3/4 (1997), 123-43. For a broader study of Iranians in India, see Farhang Irshād's Persian-language study, *Muhājarat-i Tārikhī-yi Irānīān bih Hind* (Tehran: Cultural Studies and Research Institute, 1986).

the end of his life he stood out publicly as a militant champion of Sunni Islam, who had extended the *Dār al-Islām* into South Asia – and demonstrated how profitable it could be – while fostering a Persianate culture that became the normative administrative and literary language of Muslim India during the Sultanate era.

In terms of Turkic identities it is notable how little visible lasting effect the Turks of the Ghaznavid and later Delhi sultanate dynasties in Afghanistan and India had on Indo-Muslim culture. Turks constituted the core of Ghaznavid armies and may have comprised the majority of its troops, and Indians saw themselves invaded by Turks (*Turushka*), rather than by Muslims – or Iranian poets.<sup>11</sup> Turkish *ghulāms* comprised the core of the armies of the Ghurids, the very rustic Iranians or Afghans who overran Ghaznavid dominions in the east in the twelfth century, and *ghulāms* continued to dominate the military establishments of their two immediate and evanescent successors, the Shamsids and Ghiyathids (1210-90), “who were themselves Turks.”<sup>12</sup> *Ghulāms* continued to be prominent in the forces of the two later Sultanate dynasties – the Khaljis (1290-1320), themselves possibly Turks long settled in Afghanistan, and the Tughluqs (1320-98). There may have been as many as 20,000 Turkic *ghulāms* serving in the mid-fourteenth-century regime of Muḥammad b. Tughluq.<sup>13</sup> The continued predominance of Turks in North Indian armies led Indians to use the term Turk as a generic identifier for members of the ruling military class.<sup>14</sup>

The question about these Turks is whether or not their presence produced a distinct ethnic core or cultural node that survived these regimes. It would have been unusual for rough-hewn *ghulāms* to meditate on their ethnic identity or to discourse on their cultural attributes, and none of them are known to have done so. The one individual who did at least exalt the Turks at the beginning of the Sultanate era – for their power, language and patronage – was Fakhr al-Dīn Mubārakshāh, also known as Fakhr-i Mudabbir, who wrote the *Tārīkh-i Fakhr al-Dīn Mubārakshāh* at Lahore in 1206, the year of the murder of the Ghurid sultan Mu‘izz al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Sām, whose conquests laid the basis for the Delhi sultanate (1210-1398).<sup>15</sup> Fakhr-i Mudabbir may have been

11 Peter Jackson, *The Delhi Sultanate* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 123 and 143.

12 Sunil Kumar, *The Emergence of the Delhi Sultanate* (Delhi: Permanent Black, 2007), 197. For the status of Turks in the thirteenth century Delhi sultanate, see also S.B.P. Nigam, *Nobility Under the Sultans of Delhi 1206-1398* (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1968).

13 Jackson, *Delhi Sultanate*, 183 and Appendix B, 194-5.

14 Kumar, *Emergence of the Delhi Sultanate*, 197-8; and Jackson, *Delhi Sultanate*, Appendix 1, “Jūzjānī’s use of the word ‘Turk.’”

15 Fakhr Mubārakshāh (Fakhr-i Mudabbir), *Tārīkh-i Fakhrū’d-Dīn Mubārakshāh being The Historical Introduction to the Book of Genealogies of Fakhrū’d-Dīn Mubārakshāh*

a native of Mawarannahr or a descendant of a Central Asian native. His father evidently was a member of the literati, who had mixed with many of the learned individuals who had gathered in Ghazna. Fakhr-i Mudabbir wrote in Persian, as did court historians and other intelligentsia of the Ghaznavid and Sultanate eras.

Writing a century and a half after Mahmūd al-Kāshgharī had celebrated Turkic achievements, and just as a Turkic *ghulām* took control of the embryonic Indo-Muslim state, Fakhr-i Mudabbir had even more reason than his predecessor to exalt the Turks. His work, a compendium of sorts, contains a summary of Ptolemaic geography; an allusion to Sasanian traditions; a brief summary of Islamic principles; a glowing reference to the melons that the last Ghurid sultan had sent from Rajasthan to Herat; and praise for Quṭb al-Dīn Aybeg (r. 1206-10), the *ghulām* who succeeded Mu‘izz al-Dīn in 1206, who also patronised his fellow Turks. Fakhr-i Mudabbir principally celebrated Turks, and he opened his text by observing that “in their own country” they are nothing more than one tribe among many, but when they leave their homes and families they become amirs. There is no other instance in history, he asserts, of a slave becoming a king, except among the Turks. Fakhr-i Mudabbir then follows with a brief account of the Toghuz/Oghuz, in which he also discusses the associated spread and popularity of the Turkish language. He describes the language’s scripts, one of which was borrowed from Soghdian, and gives an example of a Turkish *rubāʿī* or quatrain. He gives an account of the Khazars and lists Turkic tribes, including the Khazars, and many Oghuz sub-tribes. His list includes the Afshar, one of the later Safavid Qizilbash tribes, who under Nādir Shāh Afshār (r. 1736-47) succeeded the Safavids. He also praises Turkish feats of arms against Hindu forts. Finally, Fakhr-i Mudabbir celebrates Turkish generosity and cites an example – a mistaken example – of how Maḥmūd of Ghazna (971-1030) lavishly rewarded the Persian-language poet Anvarī (1126-1189) for verse that he had written to commemorate the sultan’s conquest or sack of the Somnath temple complex.<sup>16</sup>

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*Marvar-rūdī* [sic] completed in AD 1206, E. Denison Ross (ed.), Vol. 4 (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1927), vi. See also E. Denison Ross, “The Genealogies of Fakhr-ud-Dīn Mubārak Shāh,” in T.W. Arnold and Reynold A. Nicolson (eds), *A Volume of Oriental Studies Presented to Edward G. Browne on His Sixtieth Birthday* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922), 392-413.

16 Fakhr-i Mudabbir, *Taʾrīkh-i Fakhruʿd-Dīn Mubārakshāh*, 39-52; see also the chapter by Blain Auer in this volume. In fact, Anvarī wrote panegyric poems for the Seljuq sultan Sanjar and his successors. For Maḥmūd of Ghazna’s expedition and the historiography of the famous Somnath temple complex, see Romila Thapar, *Somanatha: the Many Voices of History* (New York: Verso, 2005), and see the chapter by George Malagaris in the present volume.

Fakhr-i Mudabbir wrote his panegyric account at the precise moment that a Turkic *ghulām* became the sultan of Lahore and Delhi, and it is understandably filled with paeans to the glories of the Turks in the early thirteenth century – and those triumphs continued for another three centuries. Nonetheless, in the Indian case the Turkic population was largely confined to a relatively small military class, supplemented by the migration of individual free Turks from India's Central Asian and Afghan borderlands, many of whom arrived in India as refugees from Mongol depredations in the thirteenth century. Despite Fakhr-i Mudabbir's praise for the Turks of his day and their continued military importance in Hindustan during the following two centuries, they left little trace of their presence in either the cultural or political life of the region.

It was the Persianate culture patronised by the Ghaznavids that flourished in North India over these centuries. Apart from al-Bīrūnī and Firdawsī, the early and later Ghaznavids in Ghazna and Lahore patronised such Persian poets as Sanā'ī Ghaznawī (1045-1131) and Mas'ūd Sa'd Salmān (b. 1046), and the philosophically influenced Persian-language historian Bayhaqī (995-1077). The Persianate literary and historical tradition continued to flourish during the Sultanate years, featuring the literary work of the enormously productive and influential Amīr Khusraw Dihlavī (1253-1335), who was and is famous throughout the Persianate world, and the historical works of Żiyā' Baranī (1285-1357). No names of influential Turkic authors of Turki prose or verse emerged during these years, a period, after all, when Turki literature was just beginning to develop in the isolated chrysalis of Khwarazm to the south of the Aral sea.<sup>17</sup>

The lack of a noticeable Turkic cultural influence in pre-Mughal times is matched by the disappearance of a distinct or substantial Turkic military and political presence following Temūr's invasion of India and sack of Delhi in 1398. The subcontinent never experienced a massive migration of Turkic tribes – such as the Oghuz migration/invasion into Iran and Anatolia, which began early in the eleventh century. The best measure of the degree to which the Turkish military elite in Hindustan became assimilated is the evidence for what followed Temūr's invasion of 1398, which destroyed what remained of the Delhi Sultanate. Following that event, the Punjab and the Agra Doab region were first ruled by a weak Sayyid dynasty, to be followed by the more

<sup>17</sup> Regarding the early Central Asian development of Turki literature, see János Eckmann, *Harezm, Kıpçak ve Çağatay Türkçesi üzerine Araştırmalar* (Ankara: Atatürk Kültür Merkezi, 1996); and for a discussion of one of the earliest Turki texts from the Khwarazmian region, the mid-fourteenth-century religious work the *Neheci'l Feradis*, see E.N. Nadzhip, "Prozaicheskoe Sochinenie XIV v. *Nakhdzh al-faradis*: Istoriya Izucheniya Kharakternye Osobennosti Yazika," in E. N. Nadzhip (ed.), *Issledovaniia po Istorii Tiurskikh Yazikov XIV vv.* (Moscow: Nauka, 1989), 137-46.

formidable sultanate of Lodi Afghans – Afghans, not Turks – who ruled Hindustan as a kind of tribal oligarchy from the 1440s until 1526. Sources for fifteenth-century Hindustan do not reveal the presence of an organised Turkic military force, nor do they identify a Turkic-speaking community. What happened to the thousands of Turks who had entered India during the previous centuries? They either left the subcontinent or, more likely, they became assimilated as individuals, just as most of them had been enslaved and trained as individuals, entering India as *ghulāms* and not, as Afghans did, as members of a larger clan or tribe many of whose extended families settled in India.<sup>18</sup> No Indian Turks are known to have joined the Timurid Zāhir al-Dīn Muḥammad Bābur, a Turki-speaking Turk, after he crossed the Indus in December 1525 on his way to defeat the Afghan Ibrāhīm Lodi in April 1526. Nor does Bābur ever allude to the presence of Indian Turks in the coalition of Central Asian Turko-Mongol *begs* and Hindustani amirs whom he led as he struggled to pacify the Delhi-Agra Doab and the Gangetic valley between 1526 and his death in 1530.

## 2 The Timurid-Mughals

The nature of the Turkic presence in India changed with Bābur's victories. Bābur represented a new strain of Turkic ruler in India. First of all he had matured in a Turkic ethnic and linguistic environment in the Ferghana valley, remarking in his Turki autobiography, the *Vaqāyī'*, that all the people of his town of Andijan were Turks and knew Turki.<sup>19</sup> Second, an ethnic and linguistic Turk, Bābur was also a political Turk. He matured as a descendant of Temür and inherited the pride and imperial ambitions of a member of the Timurid line. Describing how he captured the Punjabi town of Bhirah in 1519, his first Indian conquest, Bābur justified the occupation by remarking that both it and neighbouring towns had previously “been under the control of the Turk”, that is it had been overrun by his ancestor Temür.<sup>20</sup> Third, Bābur not only grew up among Turks, spoke Turki and conquered India as a political Turk, but he also

18 Afghans had served in Ghaznavid armies and in most Sultanate regimes. Tribesmen probably began entering northwestern India in significant numbers from this period, if not earlier. They were definitely settled in large numbers throughout Hindustan, from the Punjab to the Ganges valley, by the fifteenth century. See the multiple references to Afghans in Kumar and Jackson's works cited above, and in Rita Joshi, *The Afghan Nobility and the Mughals* (Vikas: Delhi, 1995).

19 Zāhir al-Dīn Muḥammad Bābur, *Bābur-Nāma (Vaqāyī')*, ed. Eiji Mano (Kyoto: Syokado, 1995), fol. 2b.

20 *Ibid.*, fol. 226b.



was a highly literate Turki writer, who in 1500 corresponded with the founder of classical Turki verse, Mīr ‘Alī Shīr Navā’ī (1441-1501).

By the fifteenth century the spoken Turkic language, which Bābur identifies as Turki, had evolved from its origins in Khwarazm into a fully developed written and literary language. In late-Timurid Herat, Navā’ī had elevated the language to this sophisticated level. Navā’ī was a transformative figure in the history of Turki literature, producing an enormous body of work and thus elevating an increasingly dynamic Central Asian Turkic language into a classical literary tradition – a tradition that had only begun to develop when Fakhr-i Mudabbir praised the Turkish language in 1206.<sup>21</sup> His verse was enthusiastically received in Ottoman dominions, where his *Dīvān* could be found in the imperial library. His poems were carried by caravans to Bursa and were still widely known among Ottoman literati in the nineteenth century.<sup>22</sup> Like Fakhr-i Mudabbir he praised Turkish, in his case specifically termed “Turki”, in a famous 1499 essay, *Muhākamat al-Lughatayn*, in which, like Fakhr-i Mudabbir, he favourably and at great length compared Turki with Persian.<sup>23</sup> Near the conclusion of this essay he also meaningfully lauded his friend, the ruler of Herat, Sultan Ḥusayn Bāyqarā (r. 1469-1506) as a person who wrote his *Dīvān* in Turkī rather than in Persian because of his “essential nature”, *aṣlī ṭab’*, by which Navā’ī evidently meant the sultan’s inherent Turkishness. Navā’ī said he hoped he had persuaded the intelligentsia of the Turkic *ulus* to recognise the superiority of Turki to Persian.<sup>24</sup> Navā’ī’s own Turkic consciousness and appeal to a broader Turkic community demonstrates a vibrant sense of unassimilated Turkishness, at least among some intellectuals. It was an identity shared by Bābur, who stayed in the poet’s house when he visited Herat in 1506. If the late fifteenth-century and early sixteenth-century Timurid world witnessed the flowering of Turki literature in the persons of Navā’ī and Bābur, it also experienced the florescence of Perso-Islamic culture, in which Bābur shared. As has been justly written about late fifteenth-century Timurid *mūrzās* generally, they

immersed themselves in the pursuits and luxurious trappings of their new life, assimilating the symbols of Perso-Islamic monarchical traditions with the celebration of their own Turco-Mongol past ... The history of the Timurid dynasty is also a history of its arts; artistic production was

21 For Navā’ī, see Evgenii Èduardovich Bertels, “Izbrannyye Trudy,” in E.R. Rustamov (ed.), *Navoi i Dzhami* (Moscow: Nauka, 1965).

22 Gönül Alpay Tekin, “Oṭḥmanlı. 111.3. Classical Ottoman Literature during the 16th Century,” *Encyclopaedia of Islam*<sup>2</sup> (Leiden: Brill, 1960-2005).

23 Mīr ‘Alī Shīr Navā’ī, *Muhakamat al-Lughatayn*, trans and ed. Robert Devereux (Leiden: Brill, 1966).

24 *Ibid.*, 35 and 39.

so closely intertwined with political, social and economic events that they must be discussed together. The changed circumstances and orientation of the dynasty after Timur's death served as a direct impetus for an accelerated cultural program ... The interests of the new aristocracy were pursued primarily within the context of urban Islam in Iran and Central Asia.<sup>25</sup>

Temür's immediate descendants, Shāhrukh in Herat (r. 1409-47) and his son Ulugh Beg in Samarqand (r. 1411-49), exemplified this development. Ulugh Beg in particular patronised mathematically sophisticated astronomical research in Samarqand, with which Bābur was familiar, attracting scholars from throughout the eastern Muslim world, including Ottoman Istanbul.<sup>26</sup> It was especially in Herat that Persianate culture flourished, first with Shāhrukh but especially with Sultan Ḥusayn Bāyqarā, who presided over the florescence of Perso-Islamic and Turki culture during his long reign from 1469 to 1506. This was a dazzling cultural moment in the Islamic world, which the Ottoman historian Mustafa Ali later applauded from Istanbul.<sup>27</sup> Navā'ī was part of this world in which Persian was the dominant literary language, as the poet regretfully recognised in his essay on the superiority of Turki.

Bābur, despite being seen so often in India as the barbaric founder of the Mughal – that is, Mongol – empire, nonetheless matured as a cultured Turko-Mongol. A fifth-generation patrilineal descendant of Temür and a fifteenth-generation matrilineal descendant of Chinggis Khan, Bābur was an urban and, yes, urbane Hanafi Sunni Muslim bilingual in Turki, his native tongue, and Persian.<sup>28</sup> He revealed much about his own sophistication when he referred to one or another of his decidedly crude or rustic Mongol relatives from Xinjiang as “simple” (*sādiḥ* or *sādiq*), “rustic” (*rūstā'ī*) or simply as *türk*, an adjective he often uses as a synonym for the two.<sup>29</sup> His warm characterisation of his father also showed which qualities Bābur admired: ‘Umar Shaykh Mīrzā was a typical

25 Thomas W. Lentz and Glenn D. Lowry, *Timur and the Princely Vision, Persian art and Culture in the Fifteenth Century* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1989), 69-74 and 79. This splendid volume is the best introduction to the vitality of fifteenth-century Perso-Islamic Timurid culture.

26 See in brief, V.V. Barthold, “Ulugh Beg” in idem, *Four Studies on the History of Central Asia* (Leiden: Brill, 1963), 129-34.

27 Cornell Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire, the Historian Mustafa Ali (1541-1600)* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), 71.

28 For Bābur's allusion to the prevalence of Turki in his town of Andijan in the Ferghana valley, southeast of Tashkent, see *Bābur-Nāma*, ed. Mano, fol. 2b.

29 See the multiple references to these terms in Eiji Mano's *Concordance and Classified Indexes* (Kyoto: Sokado, 1996), the volume that accompanies his Chaghatai text of Bābur's *Vaqāyī*.

Timurid, whose Turki language and Turko-Mongol identity coexisted with the Perso-Islamic culture of the fifteenth-century Timurids. On the one hand he acted like a Turko-Mongol warrior, who, in his son's words, "was always predisposed to conquest", *mulkgirlıq*.<sup>30</sup> 'Umar Shaykh wore a Mongol cap, except when holding court, and he was daring and bold, brave and manly, a good swordsman and a good drinker. On the other hand he was a sweet-spoken "congenial person", (*khush şuĥbat kishi*), who was familiar with Persian literary classics, particularly the works of the romantic poet Nizāmī (1141-1209), the Anatolian Sufi Rūmī (1207-1273), the prolific Indo-Persian writer Amīr Khusraw Dihlavī (1253-1325) and Firdawsī. 'Umar Shaykh was also an observant Muslim, a faithful Hanafi Sunni and a committed disciple of the important Naqshbandi Sufi shaykh Khvāja Aĥrār. Finally, his father conducted business as a Muslim sultan wearing a turban and was known, Bābur remarks, for his just conduct.

Thus, when Bābur defeated the Afghan Ibrāhīm Lodi north of Delhi in April 1526 he exemplified fifteenth-century Timurid, Turki speaking, Hanafi Sunni Turko-Mongols, who had absorbed Perso-Islamic culture. He sought to construct a Timurid state in India, but its Turkishness faded in the decades after his death to become little more than a dynastic linguistic subculture by the late sixteenth century. Despite speaking and writing in Turki, including composing a Turki Muslim legal text in 1520/21, and growing up in a predominantly Turkic or Turko-Mongol society, Bābur never expressed the kind of generalised Turkish consciousness that the intellectuals Kashgharī and Fakhr-i Mudabbir espoused. Notably, when Bābur held an imperial celebration at Agra in December 1528 he identified "Uzbek" and "Qizilbash" representatives without alluding to Uzbek Turkic identity or the dominance of the Oghuz Turkic tribes in Safavid Iran. In India Bābur publicised a dynastic Turkic identity, not an ethnic one.

That does not mean that Bābur's Timurid-Mughal South Asian state could not developed a Turkish character or that a Turkic language or dialect could not have become a state language on the model of Ottoman Turkish. The differences between the Timurid-Mughal and Ottoman cases – and the Ottomans, like Bābur, also used the term *türk* as a pejorative adjective to demean their rustic Anatolian peasantry – are many. First, no Turkic ethnic/linguistic community of any discernible size developed in North India, and Bābur did not create one *ex nihilo* by invading India with his pitifully small Turko-Mongol force. According to his daughter Gulbadan Begam, his army numbered no

<sup>30</sup> *Bābur-Nāma*, ed. Mano, fol. 5b.

more than seven or eight thousand men.<sup>31</sup> Most seem to have been Turko-Mongol Turki speakers and some indeed also wrote verse, but a Persian-speaking Iranian from Khurasan was the only known intellectual among them. Second, Bābur inherited a Persian administrative tradition when he occupied Delhi and Agra. Persian became, *ipso facto*, the language of his administration, if for no other reason than that the Lodi Afghans had used it – and definitely not Pushtu – for their revenue records. Third, Persian was the literary language of the Indo-Muslim population, as it had been since the twelfth century. Bābur could not only speak Persian and write endearingly bad juvenile Persian love poems, but he was also familiar with Persian literary classics and during his long tenure in Kabul between 1504 and 1525 he apparently read Persian language histories, which he sometimes cites in his autobiography.<sup>32</sup>

The use of Turki survived only with a few individuals, including members of the court.<sup>33</sup> Otherwise, Turki disappeared as a living language, as it did even in Kabul, where Bābur had ruled for two decades from 1504 to 1525. During the reign of the last great Timurid-Mughal emperor, Aurangzeb (1658-1707), Persian-speaking Indian Muslims needed a Turki–Persian dictionary to help them understand Bābur’s language.<sup>34</sup> Apart from Bābur, few Turko-Mongols who entered India with or after Bābur wrote in Turki. One exception was the Qaraqoyunlu Turk Bayrām Khān (b. 1504), who was born in Badakhshan under Timurid auspices and became the advisor to Bābur’s son and successor Humāyūn – and later Akbar’s guardian and *Vakīl al-Saltānat*, or chief minister. He compiled a *Dīvān* that contains Turki as well as Persian verse.<sup>35</sup> His son translated Bābur’s Turki autobiography into Persian, the well-established language of the court, in the late sixteenth century.

Turko-Mongols of varying descent continued to serve the Timurid-Mughal empire after Humāyūn reconquered Hindustan in 1545, and relations between Irani and Turani amirs have often been the subject of debate in the

31 Gulbadan Begam, *The History of Humāyūn (Humāyūn-nāma)*, trans. Annette Beveridge (Delhi: Idarah-i Adabiyat-i Delhi repr. 1972), fol. 9b, p. 12.

32 See, for example, his allusion to the *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī* “and some of the histories of Hind” in his discussion of Ghazna and Ghur. *Bābur-Nāma*, ed. Mano, fol. 137b and fol. 269a.

33 See especially for this dynastic linguistic subculture Benedek Péri, “Turkish Language and Literature in Medieval and Early Modern India,” in Ismail K Poonawala (ed.), *Turks in the Indian Subcontinent, Central and West Asia* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2017), 227-64; and the chapter by Benedek Péri in the present volume.

34 See the study of Muhammad Ya’kub Chingi in A. Ibragimova (ed.), *Kelur Name* (Tashkent: Fan, 1982), and also the chapter by Benedek Péri in this volume.

35 S. Husamuddin Rashdi and Muhammad Sabir (eds), *Diwan of Bayram Khan* (Karachi: Institute of Central and West Asian Studies, 1971).

historiography of the empire.<sup>36</sup> Yet whatever role Turkic lineage or racial identity may have played in the factional disputes within the Timurid-Mughal court, Persian remained and steadily grew in importance as the court language, spoken as much by émigré Turki amirs as by Hindus who joined the Timurid-Mughal administration. Turks who arrived from Mawarannahr or Iran apparently intermarried with other deracinated Turks or Indian Muslims and did not generate a distinct Turkic subculture. By the early seventeenth century, if not earlier, Turkic assimilation in North India seems to have been complete.

Apart from his own Turkic inheritance, the most notable “Turkish” influence in India during Bābur’s lifetime was the presence of two military advisors who were familiar with Ottoman military practice. They provided firearms expertise and, possibly even more important, told Bābur how to organise his battle lines on the Ottoman model. The two men were Ustād ‘Alī Qulī and Muṣṭafā Rūmī, evidently Iranian and Ottoman mercenaries. Ustād ‘Alī Qulī had served with Bābur at least since 1519. This was five years after the Ottoman victory over the Safavids at Chaldiran in 1514, and Ustād ‘Alī may have acquired his firearms expertise and knowledge of Ottoman military tactics in that conflict.<sup>37</sup> He commanded Bābur’s matchlock men during the assault on the eastern Afghan fort Bajaur in January 1519 and did so again in 1526 at Panipat, just north of Delhi, when Bābur defeated the Afghan sultan Ibrāhīm Lodi. At Panipat, Ustād ‘Alī Qulī also organised Timurid defences according to the Ottoman model. This featured foot soldiers firing weapons arrayed behind lines of carts roped together in what Bābur terms the *Rum dasturi*, the Ottoman fashion, with openings every hundred yards or so, which allowed cavalry to ride forward into battle.<sup>38</sup> It may have played crucial role in the battle as Ibrāhīm Lodi, according to Bābur, visibly and fatally hesitated in his charge when he viewed Timurid battle lines, a defensive formation he had probably never seen before. A year later, in Bābur’s battle of Kanwah against formidable Rajputs, both Ustād ‘Alī and Muṣṭafā Rūmī organised Bābur’s defences on the Ottoman

36 For the Turks, known as Turanis in late Mughal India, see M. Athar Ali, *The Mughal Nobility Under Aurangzeb* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, revised edition, 1997), Appendix, 175–271.

37 See Annette Susannah Beveridge, *The Bābur-Nāma in English* (London: Luzac, 1969), 469 for the reference to the Battle of Chaldiran, near Tabriz, and *Bābur-Nāma*, ed. Mano, fols 216a and 264a for the reference to Ustād ‘Alī Qulī.

38 See *Bābur-Nāma*, ed. Mano, fols 217a, 264a, 266b and Beveridge, *Bābur-Nāma in English*, 368–9, 468–9, 472–3. Bābur does not mention using firearms in the battles he fought in Mawarannahr or Afghanistan before his autobiographical text breaks off in 1508, leaving a lacuna until 1519, when he alludes to their use in the siege of Bajaur. He does not explain how or when he first acquired firearms.

model and Ustād ‘Alī again commanded matchlock men, who apparently played a major role in the Timurid victory.<sup>39</sup>

### 3 Iran and Anatolia

By the time of Bābur’s victory in 1526 the Turkification of Anatolia had been under way for half a millennium, leaving a vastly more numerous population of Turks in Iran and Anatolia than had ever lived in India. Various Oghuz tribes had previously taken service with the Samanids and Ghaznavids, before they began moving southwest in large numbers under the leadership of the Seljuq family in the early eleventh century. Led by the family, these Turks migrated and fought their way into Khurasan in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries as pastoral, nomadic, semi-Islamised tribes rather than as *ghulāms* or, as in the Timurid-Mughal case, a small invading Turko-Mongol army. As Oghuz nomads overran territory along the borders of wealthy Khurasan, they came into direct conflict with the Ghaznavid sultans, who first confronted and defeated Seljuq-led tribal forces in 1035. Yet this defeat had the effect of scattering Oghuz tribesmen more widely throughout eastern Iran. Then in 1038 the Seljuqs entered Nishapur, and two years later defeated a Ghaznavid army under Mas‘ūd. This victory made the Seljuqs rulers of Iran and increased the dispersal of Oghuz throughout the Iranian plateau. Some of these Oghuz pressed on into Anatolia and began tearing the region apart even before the Seljuqs’ expansionist ambitions culminated in their defeat of Byzantine forces at the Battle of Manzikert in eastern Anatolia in 1071, leading to an extension of Seljuq influence over large parts of Anatolia and increasingly widespread settlement of Oghuz tribes there as well.<sup>40</sup>

#### 3.1 *Iran*

The Seljuq victory and dispersal of Oghuz tribal peoples throughout Iran and Anatolia had very different consequences in these two regions. In Iran the Seljuq conquest and Oghuz settlement failed to produce an identifiably Turkic political identity or a distinct Turkic culture throughout the plateau, except in Azerbaijan. Iran, after all, was home to one of the Middle Eastern region’s ancient and most influential civilisations, which during the Achaemenid and

39 *Bābur-Nāma*, ed. Mano, fols 310b, 315b, 321b and 322b-323a. Bābur mentions Muṣṭafā Rūmī for the first time when he describes the battle of Kanwah in 1527.

40 See further the chapter by George Malagaris in this volume for more detail on these early conquests.

Sasanian eras had exerted disproportionate influence in the Middle East and Central Asia. When the Seljuq leader ʿTuḡhrīl (r. 1038–63) entered Nishapur in 1038, he and his immediate followers constituted an unlettered, rough-hewn, predominantly pastoral nomadic band, whose followers were probably considerably more primitive than the earliest Ghaznavid *ghulāms*. They spoke Turkish but did not have a Turkic literary culture of their own, and from the day the untutored Seljuq family members entered Nishapur they began assimilating the dominant Perso-Islamic culture of Khurasan.

Their leaders embraced Islamic and Iranian imperial and administrative traditions, tutored by such well-known Persian-speaking Iranian administrators as Niẓām al-Mulk (1018–1092), himself the son of an Iranian administrator who had served the Ghaznavids, as Niẓām al-Mulk had also done for a short period of time before shifting his allegiance to these Oghuz chiefs. ʿTuḡhrīl proclaimed himself a Muslim sultan – *al-sultān al-muʿazzam*, “Exalted Ruler” – rather than a Turkic khan. His son Alp Arslan (r. 1063–72) began the process of becoming an Iranian Muslim ruler, and the third Seljuq sultan changed his Turkic name, as Maḥmūd had done in Ghazna, to an Arab-Persian one, Malikshāh. Niẓām al-Mulk recorded an insightful comment about the relations between these now semi-assimilated Seljuq sultans and their Oghuz tribal compatriots, who often rebelled against Seljuq control. In his *Siyāsat-nāma*, or *Book of Government*, he wrote,

Although the Turkmans have given rise to a certain amount of vexation, and they are very numerous, still they have a long-standing claim on the dynasty, because at its inception they served well and suffered much, and also they are attached by ties of kinship ... When they are in continuous employment they will learn the use of arms and become trained in service. They will settle down with other people and cease to feel that aversion to settled life.<sup>41</sup>

Niẓām al-Mulk’s passage highlights several aspects of the early Seljuq era, including the presence of a large but indeterminate number of Oghuz tribesmen; persistently tense relations between the tribes and the aggrandising, Iranising dynasty that so often erupted into open conflict; and the hope, so often dashed, that the Oghuz could be settled. The passage illumines the fundamental problems that bedevilled all regimes of pastoral nomadic origin

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<sup>41</sup> Niẓām al-Mulk, *The Book of Government or Rule for Kings: the Siyar al-Muluk or Siyāsat-nāma of Niẓām al-Mulk*, trans. Hubert Darke (London and Boston, MA: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969), 41.

in the Persianate cultural sphere as they tried to transform their enterprises from unstable tribal coalitions to autocratic Iranian states, where former tribal *primus inter pares* chiefs would attempt to morph into autocratic sultans or imperial shahs.<sup>42</sup>

What this all meant in terms of the later assimilation of the Oghuz Turks in Iran was the increasing cultural assimilation of the Seljuq elite as they embraced Iranian political traditions and Persian culture. They coexisted with the many unassimilated Oghuz tribesmen – and no Oghuz Turkic literature exists apart from some texts concerning some Sufi movements testifying to these tribesmen's folk culture or sense of themselves as Turks. There are no authors from the Seljuq era like Fakhr-i Mudabbir or Maḥmūd al-Kāshgharī, so it is impossible to determine how much the Oghuz tribal *hoi polloi* may have been influenced by the Iranian sedentary culture that was embraced by the Seljuq family. Given the overwhelming primacy of Persian sources it is impossible to trace the subtler changes among the ruling family, or to determine how much its members consciously clung to their own Turkic/Central Asian traditions while they publically associated themselves with the heroic Alexandrian or Iranian past.<sup>43</sup> One of the most intriguing elements in this regard is the ambiguous significance of the equestrian figural imagery on Seljuq silver coins.<sup>44</sup>

### 3.2 *Anatolia*

Whatever else is unclear from the poorly documented Seljuq era, one thing is obvious: the continued importance of the Iranian administrative and scholarly class, as personified during this period by Nizām al-Mulk, a phenomenon that is made equally apparent later during the Ilkhanid Mongol era by the activities of the administrator and historian Rashīd al-Dīn (1247-1318) and the historian Juvaynī (1226-1283). The importance of such men, as well as the numerous educated officials and intellectuals in the broader Iranian, Persian-speaking, sedentary population has to be recalled when considering the scarcity of similar individuals and population among the Oghuz tribes in Anatolia. It remains unclear why, during what might be called a Turkic millennium in Iran, from the Ghaznavid era to the reign of the Qajars in the nineteenth century, only one Oghuz tribe, the Afshars under Nādir Shāh (r. 1736-47) briefly established an explicitly Turkic dynasty in Iran that celebrated its Central Asian descent

42 Lodi Afghan sultans went through this process over the course of three generations of rulers during the roughly seventy-five years that they dominated Hindustan.

43 Sheila Canby, et al., *Court and Cosmos, the Great Age of the Seljuqs* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of New York, 2016), 9-10 and 31-2.

44 *Ibid.*, 69.



and used Turki or some other Turkish language to any significant extent. Only recently has it become known that some members of Qizilbashi tribes in the early Safavid era participated in a Turkic literary culture and read Navā'ī's Turki literature.<sup>45</sup> After the collapse of Ilkhanid Mongol rule in Iran in 1336 the next major powers to gain traction in Iran were the Qaraqoyunlu and Aqqoyunlu dynasties in the west and the Timurids in the east. Unlike the Persianised Timurids, the Qaraqoyunlu and Aqqoyunlu were more “rustic”, *rūstā'ī* or *türk* in Bābur's terminology. They were more Turkish, more Turkmen in Nizām al-Mulk's terms, than the Seljuqs or the Timurids. Both began life, like so many Anatolian *beğliks*, as pastoral nomadic bands of raiders, the Qaraqoyunlu based in and around Tabriz and the Aqqoyunlu centred mainly in the Diyarbekir region of eastern Anatolia where they had been driven by the Mongol invasion. One of the Qaraqoyunlu rulers, Jahānshāh, even wrote Turkish poetry, Maḥmūd al-Kāshgharī's marker of a conscious Turkic ethnicity.<sup>46</sup> Later, the Aqqoyunlu joined Temūr's Anatolian campaign, as he defeated and captured the Ottoman sultan Beyazid at the battle of Ankara in 1402, receiving the entire Diyarbekir region in reward as Temūr's nominal vassal.<sup>47</sup>

Qara 'Uthmān (r. 1403-35) is credited with transforming the Aqqoyunlu into a regional tribal power. The subsequent Aqqoyunlu evolution from tribal confederacy to nascent Perso-Islamic state is a telling example in the discussions of Turkification or Turkic assimilation because of its origins and contrasting later history. As Qara 'Uthmān expanded his power he evidently began to develop the rudiments of a Perso-Islamic administration. However, he retained a strong sense of his own nomadic and Central Asian Turkic roots, as he made clear when he urged his followers to respect the legitimising force of Oghuz traditions, citing a traditional body of unwritten laws, the *yasak* – similar to the *yasa* of Chinggis Khan or what Bābur refers to, when discussing some inherited Mongol traditions of his Timurid cousins, as the Mongol *tōrah*.<sup>48</sup> He also warned them, as Chinggis Khan had once warned his Mongols, against settling

45 See the recent dissertation of Ferenc Péter Csirkés, “Chaghatay Oration, Ottoman eloquence, Qizilbash Rhetoric. Turkic Literature in Safavid Persia,” PhD dissertation, University of Chicago, 2016. I am indebted to Andrew Peacock for this reference.

46 Vladimir Minorsky, “Jihān-Shāh Qara-Qoyunlu and His Poetry,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 16/2 (1954), 291-7.

47 For a short history of the Aqqoyunlu, see R. Quiring-Zoche, “Aq Qoyunlu,” in *Encyclopaedia Iranica* (London and Costa Mesa, CA: Encyclopaedia Iranica Foundation, 1982-).

48 For a discussion of the nature of the Mongol *yasa* with special reference to Mongol Ilkhanid rule in Iran, see David Morgan, “The Great Yasa of Chingiz Khan and Mongol Law in the Ilkhanate,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 49 (1986), 163-76.

in cities as it would lead to the loss of “sovereignty, Turkishness and liberty”.<sup>49</sup> He was doing this at the same time as the Ottoman sultan Murad II was revitalising his own dynasty’s Central Asian Oghuz heritage as a way to reassert Ottoman authority, following Temür’s devastating victory at Ankara.<sup>50</sup> If any Oghuz tribe would have established a Turkic state in Iran in these years, it seems likely it would have been the Aqqoyunlu.

It was Uzun Ḥasan, who came to power after a prolonged war of succession in 1453, who openly began to transform this tribal confederation into a Perso-Islamic sultanate. This occurred after he conquered parts of northwestern and central Iran, displacing weakening Timurid authority in the process. Not only did he, like the Seljuqs before him, adopt the title of sultan, but as he acquired more Iranian territory he also employed Iranian bureaucrats, experienced in earlier local regimes, to administer his new provinces. While none of these individuals acquired the same stature as Nizām al-Mulk, they performed the same function of presiding over the assimilation of Turkic tribesmen into a Perso-Islamic political tradition.<sup>51</sup> Uzun Ḥasan also took care of the Islamic aspect of his embryonic Perso-Islamic state by assiduously patronising Islamic institutions and Sufi orders, marrying his sister to Junayd the *pīr* (1447-60) of the Safavi *silsila*, whose wealth and influence had grown greatly under Ilkhanid Mongol patronage. Later he also married one of his daughters to Junayd’s son Ḥaydar, who served as leader of the order from 1460 until his death in battle in 1488.

#### 4 The Safavids

The Safavids offer another case of a dynasty in Iran whose powerful and numerous Turkic element ultimately became subordinated by and in many respects gradually assimilated to Iranian culture. The dynasty originated as a Sufi order in Ardabil, which Junayd transformed into a militantly Shi’i sect, and began aggressive proselytisation among Oghuz tribes in Azerbaijan. Linked by marriage to the Aqqoyunlu, the Safavids under Ḥaydar’s son Ismā’īl nonetheless contested the power of their matrilineal relatives through his dynamic dissemination of a powerful, messianic Shi’i ideology. Ismā’īl – who evidently knew both Persian and what has been described as a Southern Turkic dialect,

49 John E. Woods, *The Aqqoyunlu: Clan, Confederation, Empire*, (Minneapolis, MN and Chicago: Biblioteca Islamica, 1976), 67.

50 Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 122-4.

51 To understand later Aqqoyunlu development see Viadimir Minorsky, “The Aq Qoyunlu and Land Reform,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 17/3 (1955), 449-62.

a precursor of modern Azeri Turkish – began his active leadership of the Safavi order at age twelve, supported by a core of Oghuz tribesmen, already converts to the Safavid cause. Ismā'īl wrote his remarkable propagandistic verse in this proto-Azeri dialect and directed it at Oghuz tribes in Azerbaijan and eastern Anatolia. However, he did not resuscitate his matrilineal ancestor Qara 'Uthmān's Turkic ideology, but instead manipulated Sufi ideals of a *pūr*'s spiritual authority with Shi'ī notions of an imam's sacred leadership and presented it all with a bewildering mélange of radical ideas in which he claimed a semi-divine status as a descendant of 'Alī, while also connecting himself to semi-mythological Iranians of the *Shāhnāma* and Old Testament prophets.

The Afshar, mentioned by Fakhr-i Mudabbir in 1206, and the Qajar were two of the Oghuz tribes who responded to Ismā'īl's appeal to join others to form the Turkic tribal military core of the Safavid state, known as the Qizilbash after their distinctive turbans. They were also two of the tribes who formed governments in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries following the Safavid defeat by Afghan tribesmen in 1722. At the tribal level many Turks like these were never assimilated into the Safavid state. Yet despite the overwhelmingly Turkic composition of Ismā'īl's followers, the Safavid state remained, almost from the first, an Iranian state largely administered by Persian-speaking officials – a variant, in many respects of the Seljuq and Aqqoyunlu patterns.

It was, first of all an Iranian state. Ismā'īl took the Iranian term *Pādshāh-i Irān*, following his occupation of Tabriz in 1501, using a title that recognised Iran, a name revived by the Ilkhanid Mongols and used by the Aqqoyunlu.<sup>52</sup> Then within a decade, Ismā'īl's Qizilbash forces overran most of the Iranian plateau, making his state more of a geographically Iranian one than it had originally been in 1501 when the base of his power lay in Azerbaijan and eastern Anatolia. That very fact meant that most Safavid administrators and clerics were recruited from the Iranian population, who spoke Persian and cultivated Persianate culture, as did scholars and poets. Persianate culture was especially entrenched in Fars, the home of the poets Sa'dī (1223-1291) and Ḥāfiẓ (1325/26-1389/90), and in Khurasan, where Ḥusayn Bāyqarā had patronised the predominantly Perso-Islamic culture of Timurid Herat, which Ismā'īl occupied in 1510, following his defeat of the Uzbek Shaybānī Khān. Shah Ismā'īl's Azeri dialect never became a state language and its use remained largely confined to Azerbaijan, where it is still spoken by many Iranians. Otherwise, Turkic speech in Iran largely remained a tribal/Qizilbash and provincial Azerbaijani

52 For Shah Ismā'īl Safavi's claim to be *Padishah-i Iran*, see his remarkable poetry translated by Vladimir Minorsky, "The Poetry of Shah Ismā'īl I," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 10 (1942), 1006-53.

phenomenon, subordinate to Persian as the language of formal education and the dominant literary culture.

Throughout most of the sixteenth century Qizilbash tribes not only dominated the military affairs of the state, they often controlled the fate of the Safavid shahs, as they did for long periods during the reign of Ṭahmasp (r. 1524-76). Yet while Ṭahmasp was often passed around different tribes as a kind of royal token, none of them ever attempted to seize power in their own name and dethrone the Safavid monarch, who enjoyed religious charisma and dynastic legitimacy. Before Shah ‘Abbās (r. 1588-1629) came to the throne the Safavid state still represented a fragile, unstable tribal Turkic confederation nominally led by a charismatic shah, but by the end of his tenure Iran had been transformed into an Iranian empire, increasingly resembling a Persian imperial state. Shah ‘Abbās succeeded in weakening the power of the Qizilbash tribes, which nonetheless remained intact and powerful, as he erected the buildings of a sedentary empire in Isfahan and celebrated the Zoroastrian festival of *nawrūz*. Historians of the time increasingly praised him in traditional, pre-Islamic terms, as the “Shadow of God”, who possessed *farr*, the divine essence of Sasanian monarchs.<sup>53</sup> By the late eighteenth century the weight of Shah ‘Abbās’s achievements and the power of Persian culture led the Qajars (r. 1785-1925), a Qizilbash tribe whose leaders still spoke Turkish, to seek legitimacy by patronising Persian culture and connecting themselves to the Iranian imperial traditions, thus continuing – so long after the original Oghuz invasion – the pattern of Oghuz tribal assimilation to Perso-Islamic culture in Iran that began with the Seljuqs.

## 5 Anatolia and the Ottomans

In comparing the presence and influence of Turks in India, Iran and Anatolia, Turkishness thrived and survived as an indelible and historically vital ethnicity and cultural tradition only in Azerbaijan and Anatolia. The reason is easily attributable to two factors: the numbers of Oghuz migrants/invaders and the presence in Anatolia of a non-Muslim or Greek Orthodox population. This contrasted with the sophisticated Perso-Islamic society that Oghuz tribes encountered in Iran or the Persianised Muslim society that Turkic *ghulāms* patronised in India and which Timurids had long embraced well before Bābur invaded Hindustan with his small Turko-Mongol force in 1525. In Anatolia,

53 See especially Robert D. McChesney, “Four Sources on Shah ‘Abbas’s Building of Isfahan,” *Muqarnas* 5 (1988), 109-12.

since Oghuz tribesmen – Muslims in varying degrees – overran a Christian territory, they did not seek to appropriate a non-Muslim culture or rule with non-Muslim officials. They remained Muslims and, for the most part, Turks. The kind of process that saw the Aqqoyunlu becoming Persianised as they conquered Iranian territory and appointed Iranian administrators did not occur in Anatolia, where the great cultural tradition was Greek and Christian.

The primitiveness of the Oghuz entering Anatolia, without a Nizām al-Mulk to help them adjust, may partly explain why the early decades of Seljuq control in the region have left few traces of an organised state structure. This was a period in which a number of different Oghuz families formed small, competing, predatory *beğliks*. Relatives of the Iranian Seljuqs, led initially by a distant cousin of Malikshāh, gradually formed a state, which by the middle of the twelfth century was based at Konya. By extending their control northwards to the Black sea and south to Antalya, which they occupied in 1210, they prospered with their control over critical trade routes. These included the profitable commerce in Crimean Turkic slaves sold to Syria and also to Egypt, where *ghulāms* of several Turkic and different ethnicities established another Mamluk or ‘Slave’ sultanate.

To a limited degree the Rum Seljuqs began replicating some aspects of their Iranian cousins, whose regime disintegrated in the second half of the twelfth century, riven by internecine struggles and devastating Oghuz revolts. Sultan Qılıj Arslān II (r. 1156-92) patronised Persian literature, as he also constructed the architectural infrastructure of an Islamic state in Konya. Then too, as had occurred in the Ghaznavid and Iranian Seljuq lineage, Turkic names gave way to Arabo-Persian titles, with Qılıj Arslān succeeded first by Mas‘ūd, then Sulaymān and later by ‘Izz al-Dīn Kaykā’ūs I (r. 1211-19) and ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Kayqubād (r. 1219-37). The evolution of regnal names paralleled a deeper Perso-Islamic influence in Konya, where the earliest historical works were written in Persian and the language may well have been used from the founding of the Konya regime, considering the origin of the Rum Seljuqs. The Persian influence continued to some degree after the Anatolian Seljuq sultanate succumbed to Mongol raids; a disputed succession; and, as in the Iranian case, uprisings of Oghuz tribesmen. In 1243, Mongol forces defeated the Seljuqs, reducing the sultanate to Mongol tribute-paying vassals and, during the second half of the century, Mongol officials taking control of the administration, although some were Iranians from Ilkhanid territories.<sup>54</sup> Only the arrival of the family of Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī as refugees from Afghanistan distinguishes the later history of

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54 Canby et al, *Court and Cosmos*, 19-20.

Konya, as Jalāl al-Dīn (1207-1273) became the most acclaimed Iranian writer of Persian-language devotional verse.

In contrast with the persistence of a dynamic, widespread Persian-language culture in Iran, the Perso-Islamic literary ethos of the Konya regime seems to have been largely confined to the court, but the language was also evidently used to some degree in urban areas, at least among the diaspora of Iranian artisans and merchants living there.<sup>55</sup> Anatolia lacked a social base of ethnic Persian-speaking Iranians as was the case on the Iranian Plateau. At least the Konya sultans' embrace of things Persian did not take root in the sultanate or bequeath a substantive legacy of Persianate culture in the region. Whether or not it would have survived if the Mongols had not intervened remains problematic. The Mongol incursions and conquests seem to have had a contradictory effect in that while Iranian refugees such as Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī's family took refuge in central Anatolia, so too did many more Oghuz tribesmen. There were, almost certainly, considerably fewer Iranian poets in residence than there were Oghuz tribesmen settled round about. Even the Seljuqs' active patronage of Persianate culture seems to have atrophied with the disruption caused by Mongol suzerainty and Mongol–Mamluk (Egyptian) conflicts. The Anatolian Seljuq state finally collapsed in 1308, by which time more Oghuz had pressed into western Anatolia, where they established various-sized Turkic *beğliks* throughout the region.

Even before this, one of the single most important independent Oghuz *beğliks*, the Karamanids (c. 1250-1487), possibly led by members of the Afshar tribe, had been using Turkish as the language of administration of their substantial state in south-central Anatolia. They were the first of the Turkic *beğliks* to do so in this region so distant from urban nodes of Persianate culture. In the western Anatolian environment Greek inhabitants in the region adjusted to the Turkic presence and adopted Turkish, in contrast to the history of Oghuz tribes in Iran, where the Iranian population retained its cultural precedence. Here, in contrast to the Seljuqs of Iran and Anatolia, no ruler took Persian names or titles; the last had a Turkic name, Turgutoğlu (r. 1483-7).<sup>56</sup> At roughly the same time that the Karamanids were expanding in the south the Ottomans, one of the western Oghuz *beğliks*, began to transform themselves from a rough-hewn, semi-nomadic, predatory Oghuz tribal confederation into a state, whose Turkic character was never in doubt.

55 See A.C.S. Peacock, "Islamisation in Medieval Anatolia," in idem (ed.), *Islamisation, Comparative Perspectives from History* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017), 143-4.

56 For a largely political and military history, see F. Sümer, "Karamān-Oğhulları," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*<sup>2</sup> (Leiden: Brill, 1960-2005). See also Speros Vryonis, *Studies on Byzantium, Seljuks, and Ottomans: Reprinted Studies*, (Charlottesville, VA: Undena Publications, 1981).

While the Ottomans – like the Seljuqs of Rum, whom they claimed as their political ancestors – revered Persian literature and admired the administrative prowess of Iranians, great numbers of whom they initially employed, they represented an identifiably Turkish enterprise from the earliest period in their history to its imperial end in the twentieth century. Situated on the Byzantine borderlands and far from the centres of Persian influence, their dynasty's founder Osman (d. 1323/24) is pictured by later Ottoman historians as a descendant of a legendary Central Asian Oghuz Turk, Oghuz Khan. Osman, whose life and reign, almost totally lacking in documentation, may not have possessed a similarly precise and historically conscious view of his lineage, but in the minds of his successors and their historians, poets and painters, later Ottomans' sense of themselves as Turks and their pride in a specifically Turkish/Ottoman literature grew over time.

Ottoman rulers revered Persian verse, and sometimes wrote it themselves in the century following the conquest. Jāmī (1414-1492), the enormously productive poet of Timurid Herat, was an influential figure in Ottoman dominions, although so was his friend, the equally popular Turki poet Navā'ī. The great thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Persian lyricists Sa'dī and Ḥāfīz were also prestigious Persian classicists in Ottoman literary circles as literary models. When considering Turkic ethnicity, though, the important point to recall, apart from noting the existence of a large Turkic-speaking population, is that during the years in which Navā'ī was producing work that established Turki classical literature, Turkic-speaking poets in Istanbul were writing Persian-like *ghazals* and *qaṣīdas* in Ottoman Turkish. Ahmed Paşa (d. 1497) and Necati (d. 1509) both wrote for Mehmed II, and Necati is widely regarded as the Ottoman Navā'ī, the founder of a distinctly Ottoman verse, especially for his adaptation of the Perso-Arabic metrical system for Ottoman use.<sup>57</sup> Still, Persianate literary culture could at least be admired from afar by intellectuals and adapted for Turkish purposes, including the work of the emerging innovative Iranian and Indo-Persian style known as *sabk-i hindī* associated with the Shirazi poet Fighānī (d. 1519).<sup>58</sup>

It is of course ironic that sophisticated Istanbul Ottomans referred to their Turkic brethren in the countryside condescendingly as *türks*, using the word as Bābur did when describing his rustic Chaghatai Mongol relatives from Xinjiang. Still, there was never any question throughout Ottoman history of the

57 Walter Andrews, Najaat Black and Memet Kalpaklı, *Ottoman Lyric Poetry* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1997), 218 and Th. Menzel, "Neḍjātī Bey", *Encyclopaedia of Islam*<sup>2</sup> (Leiden: Brill, 1960-2005).

58 See especially Paul E. Losensky, *Welcoming Fighānī: Imitation and Poetic Individuality in the Safavid-Mughal Ghazal* (Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda, 1989).

essential Turkic core of the empire being subsumed either into Iranian or even Arab culture. Ottomans moved such *türk* Turks into the Balkans to stabilise their control there and, of course, it was the Young Turks who eventually seized control of the Ottoman state, with one such officer, Mustafa Kemal, eventually proclaiming himself Atatürk, the Father of the Turks.

## 6 Brothers in Empire

In the most general terms surveyed here it is evident that Turkish acculturation or assimilation occurred most thoroughly in Hindustan, where it is impossible to point to an ethnic core of Turk speakers that survived either the Turkish *ghulām*-dominated sultanate or the ethnically and politically Turki Timurid-Mughal dynasty. In Seljuq, post-Seljuq and Safavid Iran large if indeterminate numbers of Oghuz tribes endured even into the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries, but the new, Islamicised Persianate culture that Bukharan Samanids had been instrumental in reviving was patronised by Oghuz and Mongols and prospered among the indigenous Iranian sedentary population. Only in Mawarannahr and Anatolia, where Oghuz and other Turks were numerous and powerful enough to overrun and overpower the indigenous Soghdian and Greek populations, did Turkic languages and literature prosper and ethnically identifiable Turkic populations survive into modern times.

The eruption of Oghuz tribes into Iran and Anatolia, and Bābur's successful invasion of India, yielded two indisputably Turkic dynasties, the Ottoman and Timurid-Mughal, and one Oghuz Turkic, but culturally Persian, state of charismatic Sufis in Iran. In terms of these states' relations, dynastic identity always trumped ethnic consciousness or cultural bias, but in the case of the Ottomans and Timurid-Mughals they shared a common heritage, which they brought with them from Mawarannahr. There were three especially notable religious and scientific elements of a common Ottoman-Timurid-Mughal Central Asian heritage. One was the prevalence of Hanafi Sunni Islam and, along with it, respect for and use of one of the most famous Hanafi legal texts, the *al-Hidāya* or *Hidāyat* of the Ferghana valley native Burhān al-Dīn 'Alī Qılıj al-Marghīnānī (c. 1135-1197).<sup>59</sup> It was a text that Bābur probably knew from his childhood tutorials with one of Marghīnānī's descendants, and which he evidently used when he compiled his versified Turki legal text known as the *Mubīn* for one of his

59 *Bābur-Nāma*, ed. Mano, fol. 3b.



sons in 1520/21.<sup>60</sup> *Al-Hidāya* became a standard text for Sunni law in both Timurid-Mughal and British India, and it was widely used by ‘*ulamā*’ in the aggressively Sunni Ottoman empire.

There were also two aspects of Timurid scientific and religious life shared by Ottomans and Timurid Mughals. One was the engagement in and knowledge of mathematical and astronomical research, which Ulugh Beg, the Timurid governor of Samarqand, patronised, attracting major mathematical and astronomical scholars, in particular the two most outstanding figures of the era, the Iranian al-Kāshī (1380-1423) and the Ottoman Kadızade el-Rumi (1380-1429). Bābur commented knowledgably on this research, based upon the knowledge he acquired of Ulugh Beg’s work during his three occupations of Samarqand. The research done by al-Kāshī, Kadızade and others was advanced initially in Ottoman times, for a brief period, by Taqī al-Dīn Muḥammad Ibn Ma’rūf, who built an Istanbul observatory between 1574 and 1577. It was intended to rival Ulugh Beg’s Samarqand observatory and improve Ulugh Beg’s *Zīj* tables. Subsequently, in late Mughal times, the Rajput Maharajah Jai Sing II built an observatory in Jaipur between 1720 and 1738, and used Ulugh Beg’s *Zīj* tables.<sup>61</sup>

The second common element was the Naqshbandi Sufi order, so beloved of the Timurid-Mughals, which spread to Ottoman lands in the early seventeenth century. The Timurids were devotees of the Naqshbandi *silsila*; as noted above, Bābur’s father ‘Umar Shaykh Mirzā was a personal friend of the dominant shaykh of the order in the late fifteenth century, Khvājah Aḥrār. While the order tended to be overshadowed in Timurid-Mughal India in the sixteenth century by the Chishti *silsila*, it was revived at the end of the century in Timurid-Mughal India by Shaykh Aḥmad Sirhindī (1564-1625), who was known as the *mujaddid-i alf-i ṣānī*, the Renewer of the Second Millennium. Sirhindī’s adherents brought the Naqshbandi *silsila* to Ottoman Istanbul, and Ottoman disciples later came to India to study or be initiated into the order by Sirhindī’s son.<sup>62</sup>

Apart from the spread of the Naqshbandi order from India to Ottoman dominions in the early sixteenth century there was relatively little significant cross-cultural influence or diplomatic contact between these two empires. In

60 See Annette Susannah Beveridge’s discussion of this text in *The Bābur-Nāma in English*, 437-8, 449, 630 and 653.

61 Among other works on this astronomical research, see Virendra Nath Sharma, *Sawai Jai Singh and his Astronomy* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2016).

62 Among the numerous works on Sirhindī, see Yohanan Friedmann, *Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindī: An Outline of His Thought and a Study of His Image in the Eyes of Posterity* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000).

the sixteenth century the only sustained contact involved Timurid-Mughal hajj pilgrimages.<sup>63</sup> Ottoman affairs had the single greatest impact on the Indian scene in the early twentieth century, well after the last Timurid-Mughal emperor was deposed in 1858. This took place during and after the First World War, when the French, English and Greeks were poised to pick apart what remained of the Ottoman empire. The impending destruction of the world's formerly great Muslim empire, and possible loss of its control of the Hijaz, deeply disturbed many Indian Muslims, some of whose leaders were just beginning to react to the realisation that they would soon be subsumed in a predominantly Hindu democratic state as a minority community. The psychological affect of this prompted the organisation of the Khilafat movement, in reality a kind of inchoate Indo-Muslim nationalist phenomenon. The leaders of the Khilafat movement protested against the potential dismemberment of the Ottoman empire, and their anti-British protest campaign stimulated a major uprising of Indian Muslims in far southwest Kerala. This was an area where the local Muslim population had been in sporadic contact with Ottomans since the sixteenth century, when local Muslims had sought Ottoman help in their commercial war with the Portuguese.<sup>64</sup>

Indo-Persian relations were an entirely different matter. As is now very well known, Iran dominated the Timurid-Mughal empire's cultural and diplomatic relations and supplied innumerable administrators to the court in Agra or Delhi and in the provinces as well. This began with Bābur's conquest, which

63 For Indo-Ottoman relations, including occasional diplomatic contacts, see N.R. Farooqi, *Mughal-Ottoman Relations: A Study of Political & Diplomatic Relations between Mughal India and the Ottoman Empire 1556-1748* (Delhi: Idarah-i Adabiyat-i Delli, 1989), and "Six Ottoman Documents on Mughal-Ottoman Relations During the Reign of Akbar," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 7:1 (1996), 32-48. Farooqi's book is, however, narrowly focused. It does not deal with the Persian Gulf or Indian Ocean to any extent, which is the subject of the recent book by Giancarlo Casale, *The Ottoman Age of Exploration* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), which discusses two centuries of Ottoman activities in the Indian Ocean, including Kerala. See also below n. 64 and, more recently, Maya Petrovich, "Land of the Foreign Padishah: India in Ottoman Reality and Imagination," PhD dissertation, Princeton University, 2012.

64 For the Khilafat Movement, see Gail Minault, *The Khilafat Movement* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), and for the Muslim uprising in Kerala, see Stephen Frederic Dale, *Islamic Society on the South Asian Frontier: The Mappilas of Malabar 1498-1922* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980). In 1977, when the author observed a devotional Kerala Muslim festival known as a *nercca*, he witnessed one of the participants wearing a sash with an Ottoman medal. See Stephen F. Dale and M. Gangadhara Menon, "Nercas' Saint Martyr Worship among the Muslims of Kerala," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies*, 41/3 (1978), 522-38. This curiosity was connected to the long conflict over the Indian Ocean spice trade in which local Muslims looked to the Ottomans for succour.

attracted literati and artists from Herat, as Bābur was trying to replicate Timurid Perso-Islamic culture in Hindustan. It was renewed when his son and heir Humāyūn returned from enforced exile in Iran in 1545, and reached a flood under his successors Akbar and Jahāngīr. The dominance of Persian literature, which had begun with the Ghaznavids, was well-established long before Bābur entered the country, and he brought with him the highly Persianised Timurid culture. This was supplemented over many centuries by the influx of Iranian administrators, poets, clerics and philosophers, an influx that reached even greater numbers during the reigns of his successors. The number of Iranian poet-migrants was so great that an Iranian scholar has commemorated it in a two-volume work titled *Kārvān-i Hind*, “The Caravan of India”.<sup>65</sup> One of these poets, a man well-connected with the Shi‘i clergy in seventeenth-century Safavid Isfahan, was Ashraf Māzandarānī, who explained much of the appeal of India when he wrote, “Whoever comes to Hindustan from Iran imagines, That in India gold is scattered like stars in the evening sky.”<sup>66</sup>

Māzandarānī’s verses, which included a number of other poems in which he revealed the love–hate relationship that many Iranians felt for India, hint at the economic reason for the Iranian migration, which probably would have held true for Ottomans as well if they had enjoyed a common border with the Timurid-Mughals. The simple fact of the economic relations of the Ottoman, Safavid and Timurid-Mughal empires was the overwhelming economic dominance of India, with its population of more than a hundred million people and superbly fertile territories, compared to perhaps twenty-two million in Ottoman dominions and nine to ten million people in Iran. Indians not only produced many prized commodities, cotton cloth first among them, but its population also included superbly efficient commercial castes. In economic terms Hindustan and greater India represented a financial “black hole”, into which flowed currency from South America through Ottoman and Safavid dominions, and Naima, an Ottoman annalist, once complained about the trade imbalance, observing that so much money went to the subcontinent that “the world’s wealth accumulates in India.”<sup>67</sup> In Iran the situation was no better, and not only did the currency that entered Iran from Ottoman dominions to pay for silk thread or cloth continue onwards into India, but Hindus, Punjabi Khatri and others, estimated to number at least 10,000 in the mid-seventeenth

65 Aḥmad Gulchīn-i Ma‘ānī, *Kārvān-i Hind*, 2 vols (Tehran: Āstān-i Quds-i Razavi, 1990).

66 *Ibid.*, Vol. 1, 71.

67 Halil İnalçık, “The India Trade,” in Halil İnalçık and Donald Quataert (eds), *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 354-5.

century, controlled much of Iran's internal commerce and functioned as bankers as well.<sup>68</sup>

## 7 Conclusion

This brief chapter has meant to do no more than discuss the distinctly different Turkishness of India, Iran and Anatolia and briefly to outline some of the cultural and economic relations of the Timurid-Mughal, Safavid and Ottoman empires. These empires present a cultural picture of a descending rule line from the entrenched Turkishness that took hold in Anatolia, heavily settled with Oghuz tribes, amidst a Greek-speaking population; to the Turkishness of the powerful Qizilbash tribes in Iran, persisting amidst and culturally subordinate to a highly sophisticated Persian-speaking population; to the impeccable Turkishness of the founder of the Timurid-Mughals, whose descendants cared little for their ethnicity or native language after they settled in Hindustan and ruled in Persian, the language of Indo-Muslim administration, literature and history. The varied Turkishness of these states had little to do with their later histories, whose trajectories were shaped by dynastic interests, even when Oghuz tribes, which were part of the Safavid tribal coalition, fought Ottomans, themselves highly conscious of their Oghuz Turkic descent. The military/territorial relations of these empires remained quite constant: hostility and periodic armed conflict on the Ottoman–Safavid frontiers fuelled by the Sunni–Shi'a difference, perennial Safavid-Mughal struggles over Qandahar, but no plan or attempt by any state to obliterate another. All the while merchants and scholars, poets and philosophers moved across these frontiers, and the great Iranian lyricist Ḥāfiẓ found no difficulty in writing that he had been smitten by a beautiful Shirazi Turk, for whose dark mole he would give both Bukhara and Samarqand!

*Agar ān Turk-i Shīrāzī ba dast ārad dil-i mārā  
Ba khāl-i hindūyish bakhsham Samarqand u Bukhārārā*

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68 See especially Mehdi Keyvani, *Artisans and Guild Life in the Later Safavid Period* (Berlin: Klaus Schwartz, 1982), 228.

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## The “Advent of the Turks” and the Question of Turkish Identity in the Court of Delhi in the Early Thirteenth Century

*Blain Auer*

The thirteenth-century emergence of Delhi as a capital of Muslim rulers in northern India was a transformational moment in the history of South Asian polities. In modern history writing, as well as in medieval Persian historiography, this event is understood to be the foundation for the Delhi sultanate, the rule of four successive Islamic dynasties (Shamsi, Ghiyathi, Khalji and Tughluq) that spanned the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. A significant portion of contemporary history writing has framed the origin of the Delhi sultanate in ethnic terms, referring to the “advent of the Turks” and the “Turkish state”. However, the picture of Turkish identities in the medieval sources is ambiguous. While medieval historians discussed the Turkish identity of some of the Delhi sultans, it is not a central organising feature of the political and cultural systems established during this period. This chapter will deal with three fundamental questions. What is the meaning of a ‘Turkish state’ in the Delhi sultanate? What was the role and influence of Turkish identity in the politics and culture of the sultans of Delhi? What does it mean to be a Turk in the minds of medieval authors writing in Persian?

In responding to this series of interrelated questions we are trying to understand the complex make-up of diverse polities that comprise the imperial formation known as the Delhi sultanate. The curious nature of this question is that Turkishness is not simply an ethnic designation but was also intimately tied to military skill and slave status. Therefore, part of the answer involves other questions. What becomes of Turkishness after a slave goes free? What is the status of Turkishness for the descendants of Turks? I will give three case studies from the Delhi sultanate in the thirteenth century to try to understand the link between ethnicity, military service and slave status in South Asia: Qutb al-Dīn Aybeg, Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish and Ghiyāth al-Dīn Balaban.

## 1 The Ethnic Diversity of the Delhi Sultanate Polity

In *Religion and Politics in India during the Thirteenth Century*, K.A. Nizami, the doyen of medieval Islamic history of South Asia, organised the chronology of this period in three phases, each centred on Turkish identity: "India on the Eve of the Turkish Invasions", "Advent of the Turks" and "Turkish State". He writes, "When the Turkish military operations started, India was nothing more than a medley of principalities wedded to a policy of eternal hostility and perpetual strife among themselves."<sup>1</sup> Nizami is not alone in presenting the thirteenth century as a history of Turkish conquest.<sup>2</sup> His views are representative of some general ways in which the history of the period has been described. There are two dimensions of his presentation that require scrutiny. First is the criticism of the disunity during this period of "Indians", who are said to lack the unity necessary to face their Muslim foe. "India" in this context does not mean the entire subcontinent but principally the Yamuna–Ganges region. It is a vast region, extremely diverse culturally and linguistically. Some of the major political players there were the Chahamanas, Chandela and Gahadavala rulers. Rulers of these kingdoms in North India forged alliances with neighbouring kingdoms and launched campaigns against rivals. There is no evidence to support the idea that these different polities were "wedded to a policy of eternal hostility".

A second aspect central to Nizami's presentation that requires revision is the idea that the major military advances made under Ghaznavid, Ghurid and then Delhi sultanate rulers can be blended into a coherent narrative of Turkish conquest: was there a "Turkish military operation" in India? Presumably this means that the soldiers participating in the conquest were Turks or that their leaders were Turks. However, the picture is much more complex than this. Viewed from a broad historical perspective Turks were slowly integrated into the military ranks and domestic service in the Abbasid empire as early as the mid-ninth century, although this early history remains obscure.<sup>3</sup> More solid evidence comes from the reign of al-Mu'tasim (r. 833-42), but there was no single historical event that signalled the coming of the Turks.<sup>4</sup> And Turk did

1 Khaliq Ahmad Nizami, *Religion and Politics in India during the Thirteenth Century*, new revised edition (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2002), 69.

2 André Wink, *Al-Hind: The Making of the Indo-Islamic World*, Vol. II, *The Slave Kings and the Islamic Conquests 11th-13th Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 23.

3 Clifford Edmund Bosworth, "Barbarian Incursions: The Coming of the Turks into the Islamic World," in D.S. Richards (ed.), *Islamic Civilisation, 950-1150* (Oxford: Cassirer, 1973), 3-9.

4 Osman S.A. Ismail, "Mu'tasim and the Turks," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 29/1 (1966), 14.

not always mean Turk in the sources of the period. Soldiers brought into the Abbasid army from Samarqand “were commonly referred to as Turks, not all of them were in fact of Turkish origin”.<sup>5</sup> The problem of the indiscriminate use of the term Turk to apply to non-Turkish peoples is found as well in the *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī* of Minhāj Sirāj Jūzjānī (b. 1193), one of the main sources on Turks in the thirteenth century.<sup>6</sup>

To speak of Ghaznavid and Ghurid polities, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, solely in terms of Turkishness would be misleading. We cannot speak of these dynasties as being Turkish in the same way as the Qarakhanid rulers who emerged in Turkestan in the tenth century and whose rule lasted until the early thirteenth century. Clifford Bosworth points out the difference in social formation that distinguished the Ghaznavid rulers from their Qarakhanid equivalents:

The great dynasties of Turkish chieftains which arose contemporaneously with the Ghaznavids, like the Qarakhanids, or shortly afterwards, like the Seljuqs, had not spent a formative period within the military slave institutions or the cultural ambience of the indigenous Iranian dynasty, as had the first Ghaznavids. The Qarakhanids and Seljuqs were of free Turkish and not slave origin; they depended at least initially, on a mass Turkish tribal backing and not a *déraciné* professional army.<sup>7</sup>

The difference in social background is key to understanding the place of Turkishness in medieval Islamic polities. It highlights the process of acculturation that shaped the lives of many soldiers of Turkish ethnicity. Former slaves who rose to high office in the Samanid court were cultured in Perso-Islamic modes of governance, leaving their Turkishness behind them.<sup>8</sup> They showed very little interest in promoting Turkish language and culture at the court when they assumed power. What language, then, served to unite these diverse groups of soldiers? Was Turkish used at the level of military command? The language of the court was Persian and it served to bind together the diverse body of soldiers employed in the Ghaznavid armies, at least at the elite levels. In fact, they were

5 Ibid.

6 Jackson points out several such cases. See Peter Jackson, *The Delhi Sultanate: A Political and Military History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 326.

7 Clifford Edmund Bosworth, “The Heritage of Rulership in Early Islamic Iran and the Search for Dynastic Connections with the Past,” *Iran* 9 (1973), 61.

8 István Vásáry, “Two Patterns of Acculturation to Islam: The Qarakhanids versus the Ghaznavids and Seljuqs,” in Edmund Herzig and Sarah Stewart (eds), *The Age of the Seljuqs* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2015), 9-28.

already acculturated to Persian before they became prominent leaders. The effects of the displacement of Turkish slave soldiers from their homelands in the process of acculturation is highlighted in a particularly insightful passage written by Fakhr-i Mudabbir (c. 1157-1236) in the *Ādāb al-ḥarb wa-l-shujā'a* or *The Etiquette of War and Valour*, which is worthy of a longer citation:

It is common knowledge that all races and classes, while they remain among their own people and in their own country, are honoured and respected; but when they go abroad they become miserable and abject. The Turks on the contrary, while they remain among their own people and in their own country, are merely a tribe among other tribes, and enjoy no particular power or status. But when they leave their own country and come to a Muslim country – the more remote they are from their homes and relatives the more highly they are esteemed and valued – they become amirs and army commanders (*sipāh sālārān*). Now from the days of Adam down to the present day, no slave bought at a price has ever become king except among the Turks; and among the sayings of Afrāsiyāb, who was a king of the Turks, and was extraordinarily wise and learned, was his dictum that the Turk is like a pearl in its shell at the bottom of the sea, which becomes valuable when it leaves the sea, and adorns the diadems of kings and the ears of brides.<sup>9</sup>

The fact that many Turkish soldiers were effectively Persianised over time is just one factor modifying ethnicities of the period. It is extremely difficult to quantify the ethnic composition of the armies that constituted the imperial forces of various Ghaznavid and Ghurid sultans. What is clear from the sources of the period is that military forces were diverse, consisting of Turkish peoples of various tribes, Tajik peoples, Indians, Afghans and Arabs. For example, Sultan Maḥmūd of Ghazna (r. 998-1030) used special forces trained in managing war elephants: soldiers who largely came from India.<sup>10</sup> Fakhr-i Mudabbir mentions the diverse make-up of the army under the leadership of Quṭb al-Dīn Aybeg, which included Turks, Ghuri, Khurasani, Khalaj and Indian tribes.<sup>11</sup> The

9 Translation slightly edited from Muhammad ibn Maṣṣūr (Fakhr-i Mudabbir) Mubārakshāh, *Ta'rikh-i Fakhru'd-Dīn Mubārakshāh being The Historical Introduction to the Book of Genealogies of Fakhru'd-Dīn Mubārakshāh Marvar-rūdī* [sic] completed in AD 1206, Vol. 4 (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1927), ix. Original Persian *ibid.*, 36-37.

10 S. Jabir Raza, "Indian Elephant Corps under the Ghaznavids," *Proceedings of the Indian History Conference* 73 (2012), 216.

11 The Indian tribes specifically mentioned are difficult to identify. Mubārak Shāh, *Ta'rikh-i Fakhru'd-Dīn Mubārakshāh*, 33.

last Ghaznavid ruler, Khusraw Malik (r. 1160-86), allied with the Khokhars, a tribe of Punjab, who battled in consort with Muslim-led armies against the forces of the Ghurid sultan Mu'izz al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Sām (r. 1173-1203) in Sialkot around 1185.<sup>12</sup> Turk, Afghan, Tajik, Indian – all these categories of identity and ethnicity are deeply problematic from the perspective of medieval history.

This diversity apparently continued up to the fourteenth century as Amīr Khusraw describes the diverse make-up of Ghiyāṣ al-Dīn Tughluq's cavalry, noting that they were largely composed of "Ghuzz, Turks and Mongols from Rum and Rus" while others were "Khurasani Tajiks and nobles (*tāzīk-i khurasānī va pāk aṣl*)".<sup>13</sup> The word *tāzīk* would denote the Persian speakers living in the vast regions from Uzbekistan in the north and Afghanistan in the south to parts of Iran in the west and Tajikistan in the east – an area encompassing the major cities of Nishapur, Herat, Merv, Balkh, Samarqand and Bukhara. This diversity was, at least theoretically, seen as a strength. For instance, Niẓām al-Mulk (1018-1092) in the *Sīyāsāt-nāma* praised Maḥmūd of Ghazna for managing a diverse army corps.<sup>14</sup> In practice this may not have always worked, as the following example illustrates. Muḥammad Bakhtiyār Khaljī (d. 1206) during battles in northern Bengal left a Turkish slave and Khalaj commander with their forces to guard a bridge that would serve as the route of retreat following an unsuccessful campaign. However, on his return he found that they had abandoned their post, apparently after a quarrel, and that the bridge had been destroyed by armies of the Rae of Kamrud in Western Assam.<sup>15</sup> The story seems to imply that the conflict arose from divisions that separated the Khalaj and Turkish commanders.

The sources show that the make-up of the armies was a diverse amalgam of people from different regions of the empire. Since this was the case, then what and where is the Turkishness of the empire? Turkishness presumably resides in the ethnic identity of the ruler and is a reason by which any specific imperial formation can be named Turkish. However, this is also deeply problematic.

12 Minhāj Sirāj Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, 2nd edn, 2 vols (Kabul: Anjuman-i Tārikh-i Afghānistān, 1342), Vol. 1, 398; Minhāj Sirāj Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī: A General History of the Muhammadan Dynasties of Asia, including Hindustan; from AH 194 (810 AD) to AH 658 (1260 AD) and the Irruption of the Infidel Mughals into Islam*, trans. H.G. Raverty, 2 vols (New Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, 1970), Vol. 1, 454-55.

13 Amīr Khusraw, *Tughluqnāma* (Aurangabad: Maṭba'-'yi Urdū, 1933), 84.

14 Niẓām al-Mulk, *The Book of Government or Rules for Kings: The Sīyar al-Muluk or Sīyāsāt-nāma of Nizām al-Mulk*, trans. Hubert Darke (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978), 100-101.

15 Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, Vol. 1, 428 and 430; Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, trans. Raverty, Vol. 1, 562-563 and 569.

For instance, what is the ethnic identity of the Ghurid sultans? According to Jūzjānī they are the Shansabani dynasty originating from Ghur in central Afghanistan. He describes them as the descendants of Arab settlers who were Persianised by the great legendary Persian king Farīdūn, and who thus were not Turks. Bosworth refers to the Ghurids as an "eastern Iranian dynasty".<sup>16</sup>

Other scholars have opted for a different characterisation, noting the diverse polities that participated in the political formation that emerged in Delhi in this period. In a series of essays Iqtidar Husain Siddiqui speaks of a "composite culture" whereby Delhi served to acculturate diverse ethnic groups to a Persianate courtly life, with far-reaching effects.<sup>17</sup> Scholars have avoided the problems that arise when referring to a Turkish state in India by opting for a more geographically focused identity, the Delhi sultanate. This follows the medieval designation applied by historians such as Jūzjānī, Amīr Khusraw and Žiyā Baranī, who all referred to the *salṭanat-i dihli* and never to the *salṭanat-i turk*. What applies to the political and military formations also applies to other areas of study. Finbarr Flood notes that the architectural styles and the individuals who produced them in the eleventh and twelfth centuries refuse "to remain on either side of the hyphen dividing 'Indo' and 'Islamic,' 'Turk' and 'Hindu'".<sup>18</sup> Yet even if we sufficiently problematise ethnic identity we are still left with some vexing problems. Medieval Muslim scholars did refer to Turks, and that is what I would like to discuss now. What was the meaning of Turkishness in the courts of the thirteenth-century Delhi sultanate?

## 2 Turks, Turkish Ethnicity and Slave Status in Persian Sources

Turkish ethnicity is most frequently mentioned in medieval sources in relation to military service. This derives from the fact that Ghurid sultans employed Turks in their armies. Many of these Turkish soldiers were slaves – variously referred to as *mamlūk*, *ghulām* or *banda* in the sources – who served in all levels of the military, and some of whom attained high command. The reason for the reliance on Turkish slave soldiers is complex. One economic reason given relates to the *iqṭāʿ*, the distribution of land grants under the imperial system. Sultans benefited from having greater control over royal lands through the designation of slaves as landholders. This avoided the possible consolidation of

16 Clifford Bosworth, "Ghurid," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*<sup>2</sup> (Leiden: Brill, 1960-2005).

17 Iqtidar Husain Siddiqui, *Composite Culture under the Sultanate of Delhi* (Delhi: Primus Books, 2012), 28.

18 Finbarr Barry Flood, "Lost in Translation: Architecture, Taxonomy, and the Eastern 'Turks,'" *Muqarnas* 24 (2007), 109.

power into tribal and regional allegiances. The benefits of this system are described by Irfan Habib as follows, “The attraction of collecting a corps of extensively trained slaves to make his writ run and his treasures and territories safe from clannish co-sharers must have seemed irresistible.”<sup>19</sup>

Since Turkishness is most often referenced in cases that mention slave status and soldiers, it became synonymous with martial skills.<sup>20</sup> In describing the qualities of Turks, Fakhr-i Mudabbir says that “they were known for their courage, skill, warfare and manliness, such that if Rustam were alive he would be proud to carry their saddle and if Isfandiyār were alive he would contend for the honour to prepare them for riding.”<sup>21</sup> The image of the great heroes of Persian legend acting as footmen for the military commanders of Turkish descent highlights the central role these figures played in the power relations of their period. And not all Turks were military slaves. The word Turk is frequently synonymous with soldier and with the elite military commanders who were either slaves or formerly slaves. Due to these facts, some scholars have referred to the Delhi sultanate as a “Turkish slave dynasty”. However, this is problematic when we pose the following question. What is the slave status of a dynasty when a former slave is manumitted and becomes king? While military slaves were extraordinarily significant in the imperial project of the Delhi sultans, the role of military slavery did not play the same role as in the case of Mamluk Egypt. In India the trend was largely dynastic while in Mamluk Egypt imperial change was generally *mamlūk* to *mamlūk*.<sup>22</sup> Peter Jackson notes that “at no point did Turkish *ghulāms* enjoy the monopoly of rank and office that they seem to have exercised in Mamluk Egypt”.<sup>23</sup>

One particularly influential slave soldier, Quṭb al-Dīn Aybeg (r. 1206-10), did become key to the imperial formations that developed after the demise of Ghurid authority in India upon the assassination of Mu‘izz al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Sām in 1206. Jūzjānī describes the section that treats late twelfth- and early thirteenth-century history as the “mention of the sultans who were the servants of the Ghazi sultan Mu‘izz al-Dīn Muḥammad Sām, may he rest in

19 Irfan Habib, “Formation of the Sultanate Ruling Class of the Thirteenth Century,” in Irfan Habib (ed.), *Medieval India 1: Researches in the History of India 1200-1750* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1992), 7.

20 For the perceived qualities of the Turk, see Peter Jackson, “Turkish Slaves on Islam’s Indian Frontier,” in Indrani Chatterjee and Richard Maxwell Eaton (eds), *Slavery & South Asian History* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2006), 69-73.

21 Mubārakshāh, *Ta’rīkh-i Fakhr-u’-Dīn Mubārakshāh*, 49.

22 See Amalia Levanoni, “The Mamluk Conception of the Sultanate,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 26/3 (1994), 373-92.

23 Jackson, *Delhi Sultanate*, 61.

peace".<sup>24</sup> The first of these sultans is Quṭb al-Dīn al-Mu'izzī and two others are clearly referred to as al-Mu'izzī, indicating their slave status. This included two prominent mamluks, Nāṣir al-Dīn Qubācha (d. 1228) and Bahā' al-Dīn Tughril; others who are listed under this category were clearly not al-Mu'izzī.

### 3 Manumission in the Transition of Power

Jūzjānī gives us some details of Quṭb al-Dīn's early life in slavery. He was brought from Turkestan to Nishapur where he was first purchased by Fakhr al-Dīn al-'Azīz Kūfī, an eminent Hanafi jurist, chief judge (*qāzī al-quzāt*) and governor of Nishapur and the adjacent regions. It was there that he was educated in reading the Qur'an, which certainly contributed to his process of acculturation. He also received his first training in martial combat, learning horsemanship and archery. Turks were generally known for their skill in sports and games. Fakhr-i Mudabbir notes that they played *bāzī*, running, backgammon and chess.<sup>25</sup> He contrasts this with the talents of Quṭb al-Dīn who mastered reading the Qur'an, equally establishing his religious credentials to rule.<sup>26</sup> Quṭb al-Dīn was then sold to the Ghurid sultan Mu'izz al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Sām.<sup>27</sup> The first position of authority that he held about which we learn was the post of commander of the cavalry (*amīr-i ākhur*), a position of great power in the imperial forces. He was given as a land grant the village of Kuhram (Ramgarh) located in Punjab, north of Delhi. From there he moved south to conquer Meerut in 1192 and then Delhi in 1193. Apparently, Quṭb al-Dīn received his papers of manumission (*khuṭū-t-i 'itq*) following the death of Mu'izz al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Sām in 1206, according to Islamic practice.<sup>28</sup> Clearly the most talented, intelligent and strong of the slaves could achieve high rank in the empire. Indeed, Jūzjānī indicates as much when he notes the high price that Quṭb al-Dīn fetched when he was sold to the Ghurid sultan.<sup>29</sup>

If we turn our attention to Quṭb al-Dīn's successor, Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish (r. 1211-36), we have an even more interesting case. Iltutmish was married to a daughter of Quṭb al-Dīn. He belonged to the Ölberli, an influential Turkish

24 Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, Vol. 1, 415.

25 Fereydūn Vahman, "Bāzī," *Encyclopaedia Iranica* (London and Costa Mesa, CA: Encyclopaedia Iranica Foundation, 1982-).

26 Mubārak Shāh, *Ta'rikh-i Fakhru'd-Dīn Mubārakshāh*, 21.

27 Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, Vol. 1, 416. Some of these important details are also recorded in Mubārakshāh, *Ta'rikh-i Fakhru'd-Dīn Mubārakshāh*, 21-2.

28 Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, Vol. 1, 373; Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, trans. Raverty, Vol. 1, 398.

29 Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, Vol. 1, 442; Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, trans. Raverty, Vol. 1, 601.



clan in the Qipchaq tribal union of Turkestan.<sup>30</sup> His earliest post was as commander of the hunt (*amīr-i shikār*), and he became commander of Gwalior after its conquest. He also became the grantee of the two towns and surrounding villages of Baran and Badaun.<sup>31</sup> Following a decisive battle against the Khokhar tribes of Punjab, in which Iltutmish demonstrated his valour in battle, Quṭb al-Dīn was asked by Mu‘izz al-Dīn to present Iltutmish with his letter of manumission (*khaff-i ‘itq*) some time around 1205.<sup>32</sup>

As sultan, Iltutmish retained slave soldiers just as his predecessors had. Jūzjānī lists the tribal and regional differences that can be identified within the cadre of Iltutmish's slave soldiers, and not all were Turkish.<sup>33</sup> Jūzjānī writes, “The slaves and maliks of the court of the sultanate were noble (*pāk aṣl*) Turks and chosen Tajiks, and ‘Imād al-Dīn was a eunuch and Indian (*az qabā’l-i hind*).”<sup>34</sup> As Jackson points out, “at no time, firstly, did a party comprising Turkish *ghulāms* exclude free elements, whether Turks or not.”<sup>35</sup> Sunil Kumar provides a list of twenty-five of those slave soldiers.<sup>36</sup> The solidarity and loyalty of the highest-serving military slaves, who were most often of Turkish descent, lasted beyond the death of the ruler, which also created a challenge to their status. Recently freed, these military commanders would either secure a new place in the political order or find themselves in opposition.

In the sources of the period it is often difficult to differentiate between Turk, slave and soldier. Jūzjānī frequently distinguishes between the amirs and Turks. For instance, in discussing the resistance Iltutmish met in Delhi upon his ascension to the throne he notes that when the “Quṭbī Turks and commanders gathered from various parts, some of the Mu‘izzī Turks and commanders joined them”.<sup>37</sup> Here, opposition is shown to arise from some of the commanders formerly serving under Mu‘izz al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Sām and Quṭb al-Dīn Aybeg. Again, he later says that “conflict arose between him [Shams al-Dīn] and the amirs and Turks (*umarā’ va atrāk*)”.<sup>38</sup> Elsewhere, Jūzjānī refers to the “amirs of the Turk” (*umarā’-yi turk*), which may in this con-

30 Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, Vol. 1, 440; Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, trans. Raverty, Vol. 1, 598.

31 Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, Vol. 1, 443; Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, trans. Raverty, Vol. 1, 603-4.

32 Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, Vol. 1, 444; Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, trans. Raverty, Vol. 1, 605.

33 Habib, *Formation of the Sultanate Ruling Class*, 10.

34 Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, Vol. 11, 66.

35 Jackson, *Delhi Sultanate*, 68.

36 See Sunil Kumar, “When Slaves Were Nobles: The Shamsī *Bandagān* in the Early Delhi Sultanate,” *Studies in History* 10/1 (1994), Table 1.

37 Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, Vol. 1, 444; Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, trans. Raverty, Vol. 1, 606.

38 Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, Vol. 1, 444; Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, trans. Raverty, Vol. 1, 607. For further references to this distinction, see Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, Vol. 1, 467-468; Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, trans. Raverty, Vol. 1, 658-60.

text be more clearly translated as the commanders of the forces.<sup>39</sup> Here, he is apparently making a general distinction between the military officers and the general body of soldiers, many who were of Turkish ethnicity. An "amir" was a commander holding an official imperial post, while "Turk" simply meant soldier. Some confusion is added to this terminology when we consider the military slaves of Turkish origin and of high status operating close to the sultan. These were the senior slaves (*bandagān-i khāṣṣ*), and are attested from the time of Mu'izz al-Dīn. Sunil Kumar describes the difference in the relationship between the sultan and his free-born commanders and his senior slaves. He writes, "Rather than professional service regulations between an officer and the state, it was dyadic bonds created through careful fostering (*parwarish*) and education (*tarbiyat*) that influenced the relationships between the master and the slave."<sup>40</sup>

Following a regnal transfer of power, a new cadre of military slaves would be established when former slaves of high office would transition to a new role following the interregnum or find themselves opposed to the new ruler. This was the case at the end of the reign of Iltutmish. After his death, the sultanate followed a dynastic succession for a period of ten years through four different descendants of Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish, the dynasty referred to as the Shamsids. During this time, his former military slaves continued to exert a tremendous amount of political influence. This was certainly the case over the ascension of his daughter Raḡiyya (r. 1236-40). Raḡiyya had the support of her father and some of the amirs, but not all. Jūzjānī notes, "Between the commanders of the forces (*umarāʾ-yi turk*) who joined the Sultan's procession and the dissenting maliks many violent clashes broke out."<sup>41</sup> Raḡiyya was able to split the resistance against her with the aid of Malik 'Izz al-Dīn Muḥammad Sālārī, a Ghurid amir, and Malik 'Izz al-Dīn Kabīr Khān Ayaz, a former military slave who supported her.<sup>42</sup> The Shamsid dynasty ended with Nāṣir al-Dīn Maḥmūd Shāh (r. 1246-66). The subsequent emergence of Ghiyāṣ al-Dīn Balaban (r. 1266-87) – a military slave who began his service under Iltutmish and served as commander of the hunt (*amīr-i shikār*) under Raḡiyya, the post held by Iltutmish before he became sultan – is an interesting case that I will mention later. Over this period of dynastic changes, the diversity of the Delhi sultanate polity remained the norm in the early thirteenth century. We have Jūzjānī testifying to the diverse factions that made up the court during Raḡiyya's reign:

39 Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, Vol. 1, 460; Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, trans. Raverty, Vol. 1, 642.

40 Kumar, "When Slaves Were Nobles," 47.

41 Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, Vol. 1, 458; Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, trans. Raverty, Vol. 1, 640.

42 Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, Vol. 1, 458-9; Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, trans. Raverty, Vol. 1, 640.

“On account of the favour which Jamāl al-Dīn Yāqūt, the Abyssinian, had acquired, the whole of the Maliks and Amirs, Turks, Ghuris, and Tajiks, were withdrawing from their attendance on the court of Sultan Raziyya”.<sup>43</sup>

#### 4 The Erasure of Turkishness: Ethnically Turk, Culturally Persian

This leads one to a logical follow-up question to this political history. What happens to the Turkishness of a ruler once he or she ascends the throne and then transfers that authority to their offspring through dynastic succession? First, it is important to note that there is scanty evidence of the Turkic languages spoken by the various military commanders. Fakhr-i Mudabbir notes at the time of writing the *Shajara-yi ansāb*, or *The Tree of Genealogies*, that the Turkish language was more respected than in the past because many of the military officers were Turks and many others were in their service and required their patronage.<sup>44</sup> He notes that the tribal communities of the Turks were greatly varied and numerous.<sup>45</sup> Amīr Khusraw provides evidence for spoken Turkish.<sup>46</sup>

Even with this evidence and other traces it remains difficult to identify and quantify the Turkish ethnic origins of the higher and lower echelons of soldiers in military service. Some Turkish slave soldiers underwent a period of intense training that involved the assimilation of Arabic and Persian language and culture. Presumably the most successful cadets assimilated the fastest and rose through the military ranks due to their ability to command soldiers and demonstrate skill in battle, but also to operate efficiently within the bureaucratic apparatus of the empire through a skilled use of language and dexterity in navigating social and political relationships. Sunil Kumar has noted, “The slave commander might have retained some of his primordial cultural practices, but the fragmented social fabric of his household might have made the cultural reproduction of many steppe traditions very difficult”.<sup>47</sup>

At the level of command, bonds were formed inside the cadre of soldiers who comprised the military slave elite under their master. They maintained a

43 Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣiri*, Vol. 11, 22-23; Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣiri*, trans. Raverty, Vol. 11, 750.

44 Mubārakshāh, *Ta'rikh-i Fakhrū'd-Dīn Mubārakshāh*, 43-4.

45 Ibid., 47.

46 See Sunil Kumar, “The Ignored Elites: Turks, Mongols and a Persian Secretarial Class in the Early Delhi Sultanate,” *Modern Asian Studies* 43/1 (2009), 57.

47 Sunil Kumar, “An Inconvenient Heritage: The Central Asian Background of the Delhi Sultans,” in Upinder Singh and Parul Pandya Dhar (eds), *Asian Encounters: Exploring Connected Histories* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2014), 95.

solidarity to each other and to their sultan during his lifetime, but certainly not necessarily to their ruler's descendants. Kumar describes this tension, saying, "Iltutmish's successors could never count on the reliability of the Shamsī slaves as dependable military subordinates. They had to negotiate relationships with their father's slaves with great care".<sup>48</sup> However, when discussion passes to Iltutmish's children all references to Turkish ethnicity are dropped. For instance, when Jūzjānī discusses the last Shamsid Naṣīr al-Dīn's rule and conquests there is no reference to his Turkish identity playing any role as a characteristic or trait that assured him victory. It appears that for the descendants of rulers with Turkish ethnicity all mention of Turkishness is erased. It is also the case with Turkish slaves who become sovereigns that their former slave status is discussed, explained and set aside. This is perfectly understandable. Koby Yosef notes in his study of the Mamluk sultanate in Cairo that "[t]here is no evidence that manumitted mamluks were proud of their slave status", and that they "made great efforts to repress their servile past by claiming an exalted origin or by creating marital ties with the established families".<sup>49</sup> Referring to the Turkish and slave background of some of the Delhi rulers, Kumar has called this "an inconvenient heritage" – inconvenient, perhaps, but clearly not insurmountable.<sup>50</sup>

Even for rulers whose ethnic identity was Turkish, in histories of the period they frequently appear in the guise of Sasanian kings and the rulers of the Persian mythic past. Jūzjānī applauds his patron Iltutmish, noting, "That just and munificent Sultan, dispenser of mercy, warrior in righteous battle, preserver of the world, protector of justice, exalted like Farīdūn, like Qubād in manner, renown like Kā'ūs, powerful like Alexander, and fierce like Bahrām".<sup>51</sup> Iltutmish is also compared favourably with 'Alī and Ḥātim al-Tā'i, establishing his heroic Islamic credentials.<sup>52</sup> This seems logical when we consider the overarching system of kingship. What we have in the governing structures adopted by Ghurid and Delhi sultanate rulers is a Perso-Islamic imperial system, not unlike that developed in Samanid courts and in the Ghaznavid empire – a system wherein Persian served as the language of the court and Persianate ideas of kingship, inspired by Sasanian models, governed affairs of the empire. The role of Persian in the empire is evident in that all the major histories, works of ad-

48 Sunil Kumar, *The Emergence of the Delhi Sultanate 1192-1286* (Delhi: Permanent Black, 2007), 243.

49 Koby Yosef, "The Term *Mamlūk* and Slave Status during the Mamluk Sultanate," *Al-Qantara* 34/1 (2013), 7.

50 Kumar, "Inconvenient Heritage," 102.

51 Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, Vol. 1, 440; Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, trans. Raverty, Vol. 1, 598.

52 Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, Vol. 1, 440; Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, trans. Raverty, Vol. 1, 598.

vice literature, poetry, court edicts and even legal texts such as the *Fiqh-i Fīrūzshāhī* in the fourteenth century were written in Persian. Persian was the language of empire, both culturally and politically.

Expressing the Persianate imperial model, the historian of the fourteenth century Żiyā Baranī (c. 1285-1357) noted that upon the death of Naşīr al-Dīn in 664/1266, “Balaban, a Shamsī slave, was manumitted along with the other forty Turkish slaves (*Turkān-i chihilgānī*), [and] ascended the throne. He mostly followed the customs of the ancient kings and adorned his palace and court with the ceremonies of the sultans of Persia”.<sup>53</sup> This transition following the Shamsid dynasty and the manumission of the forty slaves formed part of what Jackson has called the Ghiyathid aristocracy.<sup>54</sup> There are two interesting things to note in this context. First, there is the process of manumission following the death of Naşīr al-Dīn and in the transition of power. Second, Balaban belonged to the Ölberli (or Ölperli) tribe of the Qipchāq, according to Jūzjānī.<sup>55</sup> However, the text tells us that he followed the “tradition of the ancient world rulers” (*rasm-i jahāndārān-i qadīm*) and that he decorated his court with the magnificence of the “sultans of Persia” (*salāṭīn-i ‘ajam*).<sup>56</sup> Indeed, his grandsons were named after great Sasanian kings and legendary Persian rulers – Kayqubād, Kaykā’ūs, Kaykhusraw and Gayumart – two of whom came to sit on the throne of Delhi. This has a parallel in Seljuq history of the thirteenth century when rulers adopted the titles of Persian kings, such as during the reign of Ghiyāth al-Dīn Kaykhusraw I (r. 1192-6 and 1205-11) and ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Kayqubād I (r. 1219-37).<sup>57</sup> Balaban’s son Muḥammad, who predeceased him, received a classical education in Persian letters and promoted the recitation of great Persian literary works in his court: the *Shāhnāma*, the *Dīvān-i Sanā’ī*, the *Dīvān-i Khāqānī* and the *Khamsa* of Niẓāmī.<sup>58</sup> Baranī says that Balaban invited the great poet Sa’dī to visit Multan on two different occasions but that the latter was not able

53 Żiyā Baranī, *Tārikh-i Fīrūz Shāhī*, Vol. 33, *Bibliotheca Indica* (Calcutta: Asiatic Society, 1862), 25. Żiyā Baranī, *Tārikh-i Fīrūz Shāhī*, trans. Ishtiyāq Ahmad Zilli (Delhi: Primus Books, 2015), 17. The date is given incorrectly in the Persian edition as 662/1263. For further studies on the “forty slaves”, see Gavin R.G. Hambly, “Who Were the *Chihilgānī*, the Forty Slaves of Sulṭān Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish of Delhi?” *Iran* 10 (1972), 57-62; Kumar, “When Slaves Were Nobles,” 99-115; and Jackson, *Delhi Sultanate*, 65-6.

54 Jackson, *Delhi Sultanate*, 76-82.

55 Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāşīrī*, Vol. 11, 45; Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāşīrī*, trans. Raverty, Vol. 11, 796.

56 Baranī, *Tārikh-i Fīrūz Shāhī*, 23.

57 A.C.S. Peacock, “Seljuq Legitimacy in Islamic History,” in Christian Lange and Songül Mecit (eds), *The Seljuqs: Politics, Society and Culture* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 79-95.

58 Baranī, *Tārikh-i Fīrūz Shāhī*, 67.

to accept the invitation due to his age and infirmity, which impeded his travel.<sup>59</sup> What this indicates is that there was little contradiction between slaves of Turkish descent and rule in the Persian tradition. In the transition from soldier to sultan, Turkishness was subsumed into the political structures and cultural expectations of Persian kingship.

## 5 Conclusion

Turkish peoples formed an integral part of the Delhi sultanate polity at the level of military soldiers, commanders and slaves. What is meant by Turk is quite complex, and Fakhr-i Mudabbir provides an extensive list of the names of different prominent Turkish tribes.<sup>60</sup> However, Jūzjānī and others rarely refer to tribal distinctions and speak more generally of the "Turk". In addition to Turks, authors discussed other prominent ethnic groups that made up the Delhi sultanate, most frequently referring to the Khalaj, Tajik, Ghuri and Indian – which, along with the Turk, made up the bulk of the troops and commanders. Indian forces were either allied with or employed by Mu'izz al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Sām and Quṭb al-Dīn Aybeg during their conquests in northern India.<sup>61</sup> Indian military slaves grew in importance – for example, in the case of Hindū Khān who was a Shamsī slave and a convert to Islam. He became a powerful *malik* and was regarded with great esteem by Iltutmish, serving in various high offices during his reign and subsequently being given charge of Uch as an appointee of Rāziyya.<sup>62</sup> The political order established by the Ghurid and Delhi sultans also incorporated Indian rulers, who, following conquest, stood in a tributary relationship to the sultans of Delhi – at least, for a time.<sup>63</sup> When describing the Delhi sultanate polity, we must consider this diverse make-up of peoples who participated in the construction of an imperial system based in Delhi. Far from being the "advent of the Turk", the sultanate saw

59 Ibid., 68.

60 Mubārakshāh, *Ta'rikh-i Fakhrū'd-Dīn Mubārakshāh*, 47. And for a study of Fakhr-i Mudabbir's writings on the Turks, see Iqtidar Husain Siddiqui, "The Turks and Their Migration to Central Asia and India: Analysis of the Historical Information on the Turks and Turkestan in the Medieval Indo-Persian Sources," in Nazir Ahmad and Iqtidar Husain Siddiqui (eds), *Islamic Heritage in South Asian Subcontinent* (Jaipur: Publication Scheme, 1998), 110-24.

61 For examples, see Jackson, *Delhi Sultanate*, 21.

62 Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, Vol. 11: 18-19; Jūzjānī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, trans. Raverty, Vol. 11: 744-6.

63 These early tributary relationships are discussed in Finbarr Barry Flood, *Objects of Translation: Material Culture and Medieval "Hindu-Muslim" Encounter* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009), 111.

Ghurid and Delhi rulers build a large coalition of diverse communities to rule regions ranging from Afghanistan to Bengal.

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## Merchants, Young Heroes and Caliphs: Revisiting Maḥmūd Gāwān

*Maya Petrovich*

The manifold interactions between Anatolia and South Asia remain insufficiently explored. In particular, the presence of Rumi men in the Indian Ocean world during the high medieval and the early modern periods has invariably been defined by their appearance as ubiquitous yet shadowy *rumes* in Portuguese chronicles.<sup>1</sup> Within the Islamic framework, most analyses of western Asian men in historical India fall into one of two categories: either the “new-comers” from the western and central Islamic lands (variously called by the sources *āfāqīs*, i.e. “men from [distant] horizons”, or *gharībān*, “foreigners”, also sometimes encountered as the Arabic *gharīb al-diyār*) are viewed as a uniform faction juxtaposed with local Muslims (such as the *daknīs*), or else the Iranian diaspora is elevated into a *sui generis* privileged position that reduces all other immigrants to relative insignificance.<sup>2</sup>

Given such an imbalance, we might ask why yet another elucidation of Maḥmūd Gāwān’s trajectory is necessary. Details of his life have been explored in a monograph-length biography, encyclopaedic entries and several scholarly articles.<sup>3</sup> Gāwān, as is well known, hailed from the Caspian Sea province of

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- 1 The finer details of defining a Rumi identity will be discussed in my monograph; suffice it to say that the Rumi diasporas cannot be simply defined as exclusively Anatolian, and that they predate Ottoman clashes with the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean by centuries.
  - 2 The point here is most certainly not to “downgrade” the formidable achievements of Persian-speaking diasporas in South Asia over a millennium but rather to expand the “magical circle” of discussions about western Asian and other migrants to the frontiers of Islamicate India, particularly in regards to military labour. For a critical engagement with Deccani sources about elite formation, see Roy S. Fischel, “Society, Space, and the State in the Deccan Sultanates, 1565-1636,” PhD dissertation, University of Chicago, 2012. Also see several articles in Indrani Chatterjee and Richard M. Eaton (eds), *Slavery & South Asian History* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2006).
  - 3 For recent explorations of Maḥmūd Gāwān’s life, see Richard M. Eaton, *The New Cambridge History of India 1:8, A Social History of the Deccan, 1300-1761, Eight Indian Lives* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 59-77; and Emma Jane Flatt, “Practicing Friendship: Epistolary Constructions of Social Intimacy in the Bahmani Sultanate,” *Studies in History* 33, no. 1 (2017), 61-81. Also see Emma Flatt, “Maḥmūd Gāwān,” *Encyclopaedia of Islam*<sup>3</sup> (Leiden: Brill, 2007-).

Gilan and was not a Turk ethnically or culturally. What, then, constitutes his relevance to a volume which seeks to investigate ties between Turkish/Turkic worlds and South Asia? Why select him in this particular context, rather than an individual who would with reasonable certitude represent Anatolian diasporas in the Indian Ocean world, such as Muṣṭafā ibn Bayrām, the nephew of Selman Reis who arrived in Gujarat in the 1530s and was promptly awarded the title of *Rūmī khān*?

This chapter contends that a closer examination of Gāwān's life and writings offers the chance to elucidate several aspects of Turkish and Turkic presence in high medieval India.<sup>4</sup> First of all, Gāwān actively interacted with rulers of western and eastern Anatolia (Mehmed the Conqueror and Uzun Ḥasan, respectively, as well as their successors), sending merchants and embassies equipped with ample gifts and offers of regular commercial exchanges; his name resonated among Ottoman intellectuals into the nineteenth century because of the high value attached to his *inshā'* collection.

Second, Gāwān's ascendance took place during a period in which boundaries between Iran and Anatolia were by no means as sharply delineated as they later became. Gilan borders Azerbaijan, the old administrative centre of the Mongol Ilkhanate, which in its broad sense included parts of easternmost Anatolia, in particular the areas contested by the Qaraqoyunlu and the Aqqoyunlu confederacies. While Gāwān's attachment to his birth region is amply attested in his correspondence, which also regularly involved members of his family,

4 Following the tradition established in Turkological ethnolinguistic literature, I use the term "Turkish" (*Türkeitürkisch*) for speakers of Oghuz dialects in Anatolia, Iran and Iraq, while reserving the term "Turkic" for Central Asian Turks. This is also reminiscent of a distinction which was regularly made in Gujarati Persian sources, which invariably use "Turki" for Central Asians and "Rūmī" for Anatolians, although sources from the Deccan, particularly in Sanskrit and Kannada, do tend to merge the two at first glance. Subtle differences between the terms *yavana* and *uruṣka* for the early modern period have not yet been explored, but they could occasionally mirror the division between "Turkī" and "Rūmī". According to the brief analysis by Pushka Prasad, "The Turuska or Turks in Late Ancient Indian Documents," *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 55 (1994), 170-5, it seems that *yavana* was indeed often used for western Asian Muslims and Arabs along with the more generic *mleccha*, whereas *uruṣka* initially designated Central Asians before the conversions to Islam. Other crucial studies for the medieval period include Brajadulal Chattopadhyaya, *Representing the Other? Sanskrit Sources and the Muslims (Eighth to Fourteenth Century)* (New Delhi: Manohar, 1998) and the superb article by Phillip B. Wagoner, "Harihara, Bukka and the Sultan: The Delhi Sultanate in the Political Imagination of Vijayanagara," in David Gilmartin and Bruce B. Lawrence (eds). *Beyond Turk and Hindu, Rethinking Religious Identities in Islamicate South Asia* (Gainesville, FL: The University Press of Florida, 2000), 300-26. For a related discussion, see also Finbarr Barry Flood, "Lost in Translation: Architecture, Taxonomy, and the Eastern "Turks," *Muqarnas*, 24 (2007), 79-115.

the borders and boundaries of his Persianate world displayed a fluid and flexible nature, far surpassing the markers of the modern nation state of Iran. Being a Turk or a Persian represented a conventional dichotomy between men of the sword and men of the pen, indeed; yet, simultaneously, an educated Turk could also seamlessly pass into the realm of “Persianness”, illustrating the adage that many a law is made to be broken.

Finally, Maḥmūd Gāwān’s patronage of competent men extended to those of Turkic and Rumi heritage. After his demise, some of his protégés succeeded in establishing their own domains even as the Bahmani state crumbled apart; while the Turkmen lineage of one of them is established, others “acquired” the nimbus of an Ottoman or Turkish descent – at least in the eyes of subsequent generations. The combined impact of Gāwān’s presence and his violent death ushered in a new period of state formation in the Deccan, one which displayed fascinating characteristics of simultaneous destruction and creation.

## 1 The Ottoman Gāwān

Modern Turkish scholarship evokes Gāwān’s name primarily as belonging to an entrepreneurial individual who initiated the first documented interactions between a South Asian court and the Ottomans in the 1460s. He is mentioned in a small set of documents on legal disputations after the death of a merchant whose goods were seized by Ottoman officials. These were published by the late Halil İnalçık, demonstrating the presence of Bahmani commercial representatives in Ottoman lands, extending as far as the Balkans.<sup>5</sup> Consequently, Ottomanists have focused on the exotic and presumably exceptional nature of those short-lived trade interests, usually interpreting them as ambitious but ultimately overreaching because of the large distances.

5 Halil İnalçık, “Bursa I: xv Asır Sanayi ve Ticaret Tarihine Dair Vesikalar,” in *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu toplum ve ekonomi üzerinde arşiv çalışmaları, incelemeleri* (Istanbul: Eren Yayıncılık ve Kitapçılık, 1993), 203-58 and, in particular, 225 and 251. Scholars of South Asian history may be more familiar with İnalçık’s summary of his argument in English, “Bursa and the commerce of the Levant,” *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 3/2 (1960), 131-47 – which, however, does not include the relevant documents. For another perspective on Indian merchants in Bursa and Anatolians in India, see Halil Sahillioğlu, “xv. Yüzyıl Sonunda Hindistan’da Osmanlı Tacirler,” in Güler Eren, et al. (eds), *Osmanlı III, İktisat* (Ankara: Türkiye Yayınları, 1999), 77-90. Notably, the standard reference work on Indian history in Turkish – Y. Hikmet Bayur, *Hindistan Tarihi: ilk çağlardan Gurkanlı devletinin kuruluşuna kadar* (1526) (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi 1987), originally published in 1946 – dedicates a respectable number of pages to Gāwān’s political trajectory, albeit calling him “Mahmud Kavan”, Vol. I, 430-7.

Such an isolated reading ignores Gāwān's regular interactions with western Iran, eastern Anatolia and the Arabic-speaking world, where he had spent a good part of his formative years, including Iraq, Egypt and Syria. Geographical distances and the hardships involved in overcoming them should not be underestimated; yet, particularly in later periods when Ottomans had to contend with Timurid-tinged Mughal hegemonic claims, the remoteness of India became a literary–political *topos*, both real and imaginary, as it offered a convenient ritualistic evocation in case of disagreements.

Gāwān's mercantile acumen has been primarily emphasised by modern authors; in contrast, he himself might have envisioned it as a secondary or even tertiary sphere of his versatile interests and connections. Indeed, Ottoman scholars of the sixteenth and seventeenth century were much more aware of Gāwān's formidable reputation as a man of letters than of his commercial endeavours. In his own writings on literary composition (*inshā'*), Muṣṭafā 'Alī (d. 1600) commented that he would never be able to surpass Gāwān. Gāwān's works were also highly respected by Katib Çelebi (d. 1657), who stated that the author's fame had spread from India to Europe itself, where learned men studied his writings.<sup>6</sup>

Gāwān's main claim to fame in the Islamic world at large might be his manual of letter writing, the *Manāẓir al-Inshā'*, in which he refined some of the unclear points, differentiating between *manshūr*, *farmān*, *mithāl*, *maktūb*, *'arīẓa*, *ruq'a* and other categories depending upon the precise status of the sender and the occasion.<sup>7</sup> His other preserved work, *Rīyāz al-Inshā'*, is a collection of personal papers in the *maṣnū'* tradition of Persian writing in the subcontinent, including letters sent to luminaries whom he sometimes at-

6 Gelibolulu Mustafa Âlî, *Menşeu'l-İnşâ*, ed. İsmail Hakkı Aksoyak (Ankara: Gazi Üniversitesi, 2007), 184b in the Ottoman manuscript and 54-5 for the modern Turkish transliteration. For Katib Çelebi, see his *Kashf al-Zunûn 'an Asâmi al-Kutub wa'l-Funûn, Lexicon bibliographicum et encyclopaedicum a Mustafa bin Abdallah, Katib Jelebi dicto et nomine Haji Khalifa celebrato compositum*, ed. G. Flügel (London: Oriental Translation Fund of Great Britain and Ireland, 1852), Vol. 1, 138.

7 Ishtiyāq Ahmed Zilli, "Development of Insha Literature to the End of Akbar's Reign," in Muzaffar Alam, Françoise "Nalini" Delvoye and Marc Gaborieau (eds), *The Making of Indo-Persian Culture, Indian and French Studies* (New Delhi: Manohar, Centre de sciences humaines, 2000), 309-49. Also see Emma Jane Flatt, "Courtly Culture in the Indo-Persian States of the Medieval Deccan: 1450-1600," PhD dissertation, SOAS, London, 2009 – in particular, the extensive discussion of Gāwān's categories in Chapter 11, which is further developed in Flatt's recent monograph, *The Courts of Deccan Sultanates: Living Well in the Persian Cosmopolis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019). For the primary source, see Maḥmūd Gāwān, *Manāẓir al-Inshā'*, ed. Ma'ṣūma Ma'dankan (Tehran: Farhangistān-i Zabān va Adab-i Fārsī, 2003); an undated nineteenth-century Ottoman printing also attests to its enduring appeal among the Anatolian literati.

tempted to lure to the Bahmani court and many rulers across the core of the Islamic world.

Numerous copies of both works survive in Turkish manuscript libraries. Unfortunately, no one has yet investigated the history of Ottoman reception of written materials from and about South Asia, a complex tale which extends from al-Bīrūnī's Arabic translation of Patañjali's *Yoga Sūtra* in a *unicum* manuscript (MS Köprülü 1589) to Aurangzeb's collection of *fatāwā* which enjoyed great popularity in spite of its bulk, based on the number of preserved copies. The spread of Gāwān's works could also be compared with the mysterious affection that Ottomans had for the thirteenth-century chronicle *Tāj al-Ma'āsir*, already well known to Idrīs Bitlīsī.<sup>8</sup>

The complex matter of identifying the sequence of the Bahmani–Ottoman correspondence deserves greater attention; it will be briefly addressed below in the context of its twentieth-century South Asian interpretations, which represent breakthroughs as well as serious misreadings. A rare scholarly bridge between the two worlds was established by a short but very valuable article from the 1970s by N. Maghribi, who investigated the Istanbul manuscripts of *Riyāz al-Inshā'*. Since Maghribi's interest in that particular instance was rather technical, he primarily addressed noticeable features of colophons and dating. While he quoted passages in Persian and Arabic, he seemed less confident in the ability of his Urdu readers to handle Ottoman, which he merely paraphrased.<sup>9</sup>

## 2 Life and Legacy in the Deccan

Most of our sources about Gāwān belong to the sphere of Muslim Deccan studies, although he suffers the common fate of renowned works, being more frequently invoked than read. As for modern studies, Haroon Khan Sherwani's

8 See the lists of Persian historical manuscripts in Istanbul by Felix Tauer and Iraj Afshār, published in several editions of the *Archiv Orientalní* in Prague in the 1930s and in *Nāma-yi Baharistān*, Vol. 1/1 in Tehran in 2000, respectively. They can be consulted in consolidated fashion in a Turkish translation with additions by Osman G. Özgüdenli and Abdulkadir Erdoğan, in "İstanbul Kütüphanelerinde Bulunan Farsça Tarih Yazmaları", originally published in a *Festschrift* for Ramazan Şeşen and subsequently reprinted in Osman G. Özgüdenli, *Ortaçağ Türk-İran Tarihi Araştırmaları* (Istanbul: Kaknüs Yayınları 2006), 407-47. Chronicles relevant to India are to be found on pages 446-7. See also the comments in the introduction, above.

9 Nizamuddin Maghribi, "Riyāz al-Inshā' ke qalamī naskhe Istanbul meñ," *Ma'ārif* (April 1974), 297-311, paradoxically unattainable in Istanbul.

1942 book remains the only full-length monograph about him and it is crucial to our understanding of the man and his times.<sup>10</sup>

‘Imād al-Dīn Maḥmūd Gāwān was born in Gāwān in Gilan around 1411 into a notable local family. When his father Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad died, the commander-in-chief of the Gilan army and the minister, formerly his protégés, conspired against the Gāwān family, impelling the mother to advise her sons to seek their fortune elsewhere; after years in Mecca, one of the brothers rejoined the Gilani court. Gāwān was offered government positions in Iraq and Khurasan, but he refused them. Stints in Cairo and Damascus followed, where he focused on studying and building his intellectual networks.

Finally, he embarked on a ship across the ocean, arriving in Dabhol, a Bahmani port on the west coast of India, in 1453. He was forty-three, presenting himself as a horse merchant – a career not to be disdained, since we have records of Lord Śiva embodying a similar Muslim character in a play.<sup>11</sup> It seemed that fate was not entirely favourable to newcomers in the realm at that point; after a massacre of *sayyids* in 1447, only a tenuous peace reigned between the *gharībān* and the *daknīs*. Nevertheless, with the support of the son of the famous saint Shāh Ni‘matallāh of Kirman, who now lived in Bidar as the royal son-in-law, Gāwān was introduced to the court. Sultan Aḥmad II (1435-58) bestowed upon him a *manṣab* of a thousand horses and dispatched him on mission during which Gāwān, hitherto largely a man of the pen, displayed his military prowess.<sup>12</sup>

10 Haroon Khan Sherwani, *Mahmud Gawan, The Great Bahmani Wazir* (Allahabad: Kitabistan, 1942). See also Haroon Khan Sherwani, *The Bahmanis of the Deccan, An Objective Study* [sic] (Hyderabad, India: Saood Manzil, 1953); and the succinct entry by Sherwani, “Maḥmūd Gāwān,” in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*<sup>2</sup> (Leiden: Brill, 1960-2005). For the broader context, including the geography of the Deccan and the period preceding the Bahmanis, also see H.K. Sherwani and P.M. Joshi (eds), *History of the Medieval Deccan (1295-1794)*, Vol. 1, *Mainly Political and Economic Aspects* (Hyderabad, India: Government of Andhra Pradesh, 1973).

11 Günther-Dietz Sontheimer, “Dasarā at Devaragudḍa: Ritual and Play in the Cult of Mailār/Khaṇḍoba” in Anne Feldhouse, Aditya Malik and Heidrun Brückner (eds), *King of Hunters, Warriors and Shepherds, Essays on Khaṇḍoba by Günther-Dietz Sontheimer* (Delhi: Manohar, 1997), 63-86, particularly footnote 55, which refers to the help rendered to the Tamil poet and saint Māṇikkavācakar by Śiva. For a slightly earlier period, see also Elizabeth Lambourn, “Towards a connected history of equine cultures in South Asia – *bahrī* (sea) horses and ‘horsemania’ in thirteenth century South India.” *Medieval Globe* 2/1 (2016), 57-100.

12 For a wider context, see Richard M. Eaton and Phillip B. Wagoner, *Power, Memory, Architecture: Contested Sites on India’s Deccan Plateau, 1300-1600* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), particularly Chapter VII, “The Military Revolution in the Deccan”, which returns to some of the questions raised by Iqtidar Alam Khan in his monograph

Under the brief reign of Hūmāyūn Shāh III (r. 1458-61), his ascent continued. Gāwān held various high offices, including that of the *malik al-tujjār* (literally, “prince of merchants”), subsequently emerging as one of the three regents of the young sultan Nizām al-Dīn Aḥmad III (1461-3) and his successor Muḥammad Shāh (1463-82). During the perilous siege of Bidar by Maḥmūd Khaljī in 1462, he once more proved his mettle, relying on his men, such as Yūsuf ‘Adīl Turk, rather than on Bahmani nobles, who withdrew their troops from him. In the aftermath, he was given the titles of *wakīl al-saltanat* (often rendered as “prime minister” by South Asian scholars, including Sherwani, but perhaps more appropriately translated as “viceregent” or even “grand vizier”) as well as the somewhat grandiose *khvāja jahān* – both of which had been borne before him by his superior and rival. The latter appellation is attested across Muslim South Asia as early as the Tughluq dynasty in connection with the vizirate; accordingly, in that context it is explicitly political and always additionally defined by the names of the individuals in question. In the western Islamic world, *khvāja jahān* became synonymous with Gāwān himself soon after his demise – most likely because it sounded somewhat exotic to scholars in central Islamic lands. Unlike the similarly universalist names of Mughal emperors, which would later provoke jarring comments by Ottomans, *khvāja jahān* encountered no opposition – probably because it was somewhat misperceived by Ottoman scholars as semantically alluding to Gāwān’s excellence in many endeavours rather than being actually political in nature.

Gāwān became *de facto* ruler of the land in 1463, when the dowager queen, his close ally, withdrew from public life and the third regent, Khvāja Jahān Turk, supposedly a man of royal Chinggisid origin, was murdered (most likely with some consent or participation by Gāwān). Most later Islamic sources, including Deccani and Ottoman ones, choose to refer to Gāwān by his *khvāja jahān* title, highlighting his political aspect, while Europeans often prefer the mercantile face of the *malik al-tujjār*.

In the course of following two decades, Gāwān led multiple military campaigns against the Gajapati rulers of Orissa and the rajas of Vijayanagara as well as against the Khalji ruler of Malwa (often in coordination with the sultans of Gujarat) and the local chieftains of Goa. In most of them he was victorious, often employing his considerable diplomatic skills. His failures, such as the three-year siege of the Penukonda fortress, are only visible to us from the “updated” Telugu versions of Sanskrit classics, which add contemporaneous details, such as the *Varāha Purāṇam* and the *Jaimini Bhāratam*. Nevertheless, it

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*Gunpowder and Firearms: Warfare in Medieval India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) and related articles.

is undeniable that the Bahmani realm expanded under his tutelage, extending from Khandesh in the north to the Tungabhadra in the south and from Masulipatnam in the east to Goa in the west.<sup>13</sup>

He also reformed much of the administration, especially the revenue assessment, suddenly holding many of the local potentates directly accountable to the royal centre. Gāwān's correspondence with many luminaries of his time, including especially the Timurid court in Herat, led to epistolary friendships with 'Alī Yazdī and particularly Jāmī, who sent him his commentary on Ibn al-'Arabī's *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*. His extensive library and patronage of men of letters also contributed to the spread of illuminationist thought (*ḥikmat-i ishrāqī*) in South Asia, which is visible in Davvānī's dedication to Gāwān of his important commentary on Suhrawardī, the *Shawākil al-ḥūr fī sharḥ Hayākil al-nūr*. His concern for the well-being of his protégés is openly displayed in many instances, as in the letter which he wrote to Mawlānā Kamāl al-Dīn Rūmī about his son Khalīl al-Dīn, assuring him that the young Rumi was carrying out his tasks in Bidar.<sup>14</sup> Gāwān's most visible accomplishment is the madrasa in Bidar dating from 1472, taking the post-Mongol architectural tradition of Iran as his model.<sup>15</sup>

Gāwān's influence was paramount until 1481, when factional intrigue between the *āfāqīs* and the *daknīs* culminated in accusations of his involvement in a plot. A falsified document bearing his personal seal emerged, inciting the ruler of Orissa to invade the Deccan. In a sense, it was a Freudian moment. Gāwān was executed publicly at an advanced age, certainly more than seventy years old, by the order of the sultan Muḥammad Shāh, who supposedly regretted that decision so deeply that he himself passed away the following year,

13 R. Subrahmanyam, in "Vijayanagar" (Chapter IV), in Sherwani and Joshi, *History of the Medieval Deccan*, Vol. 1, 105 even suggests that the failure to capture Penukonda and the subsequent defeat of Bahmani forces by the Vijayanagara general Ívara Nāyak constituted the direct trigger for Maḥmūd Gāwān's execution.

14 Maḥmūd Gāwān, *Rīyāz al-Inshā'*, ed. Chānd b. Ḥusayn and Ghulām Yazdānī (Hyderabad, India: Dār al-ṭab'-i sarkār i 'ālī, 1948), 173-5 (Letter 42).

15 In spite of a strike of lightning in 1696 and its purported use as a cavalry barracks and a powder magazine, the madrasa remains formidable. Incidentally, when describing the building complex, Philip Davies's *Penguin Guide to the Monuments of India*, Vol. 11, *Islamic, Rajput, European* (Cambridge: Penguin Books, 1989), 427 defines Gāwān as no less than "the Cardinal Wolsey of India", which of course rather flatters Wolsey. Also, see multiple references to Gāwān in George Michell and Mark Zebrowski, *The New Cambridge History of India 1:7, Architecture and Art of the Deccan Sultanates* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 8, 35, 71 and *passim*.



reputedly saying with his last breath that Gāwān was killing him by destroying his innards (*bāṭin khvāja marā mīkushad*).<sup>16</sup>

Somewhat paradoxically, Gāwān's grievous demise, even more than his eventful life, was similar to a "big bang" in Deccani Muslim history: it led to an almost immediate weakening of Bahmani power, to the extent that the realm, which had been a significant regional power player with imperial aspirations ever since its establishment in 1347, completely fragmented within two decades. Notably, the men who established the successor sultanates all emerged out of his wider orbit, and in some cases even used to be close members of his retinue. Gāwān was wise enough not to only cultivate newcomers from abroad; for instance, outside the *gharībān* circle, the prospective rulers of Deccani sultanates included two local converts or sons of converts: Malik Aḥmad Baḥrī, the future Niẓām Shāh of Aḥmadnagar (who later conspired against him) and Faṭḥ Allāh 'Imād al-Mulk of Berar, *sar-i lashkar* under Gāwān.

More intriguingly in the context of alleged and assumed identities, we encounter Yūsuf 'Ādilshāh of Bijapur, whose descendants later claimed Ottoman ancestry; Qāsim Barīd of Bidar, probably a Turk from Georgia (but a Hungarian according to an early Portuguese source), who became the *mīr jumla* immediately after Gāwān's death; and, most saliently, the young Sulṭān-Qulī Quṭb al-Mulk of Qaraqoyunlu lineage and upbringing, who came to rule Golconda.<sup>17</sup> The point in all those cases is not to impose an artificial clear-cut or definitive definition of the identities of those men but rather to perceive that claims of their heterogeneous origins, often located in the borderlands between the Ottomans and the Safavids, presented a strange appeal to early Portuguese and later Deccani authors alike. In other words, they remind us that ethnic

16 Firishta [Muḥammad Qāsim Hindūshāh Astarābādī], *Tārīkh-e Fereshte*, Vol. 11, *From Bābur to the Ādelshāhīyān*, ed. Muḥammad Rizā Naṣirī (Tehran: Society for the Appreciation of Cultural Works and Dignitaries, 2010), 469, which certainly supersedes the earlier edition made by John Briggs, although the index is surprisingly flawed.

17 For copious mentions of Rumis and other newcomers in the Deccan, see Tomé Pires, *The Suma Oriental of Tomé Pires, An Account of the East, from the Red Sea to Japan, written in Melaka and India in 1512-1515*, ed. Armando Cortesão (London: Hakluyt Society, 1944), describing newcomers to the former Bahmani realm (Daquem) who acquire honourable titles, including that of *malik*, "*estas Jemtes bramcas a q chamamos Rumes ganhar soldo E omrra. Este Rey daua nomes como mjliques [...] e de mais homrra he han ou can [...] de turquos & Rumes & arabios atee Duzeemtos de persijanos*", 372 and describing Yūsuf 'Ādil Shāh as not quite Ottoman, but certainly Anatolian, "*este Jdalhan de nação he turqo de torquja seu pay foy espauo do pay deste Rey [...] por ter de sua Juridicam toda a Jemte branqa Do Reino pola mor parte por ser estramgeiro & turqo*." 371. The original edition can be consulted for the full impact of Pires's idiosyncratic orthography and diacritics.

identities, particularly in the medieval period, are always at least as ascriptive as they are descriptive.<sup>18</sup>

### 3 Gāwān as Martyr

Gāwān was already feted by an unusual array of authors during his lifetime, including the peripatetic Afanasii Nikitin (d. 1475), who describes Gāwān's entourage in his Old Russian travelogue, just a few pages before descending into a macaronic stream-of-consciousness evocation of the Abrahamic divine by mingling Muslim and Orthodox Christian prayers; 'Abd al-Razzāq Samarqandī, the ambassador and chronicler from the Timurid court of Herat, known for his own journey to Vijayanagara, mentions him very briefly, comparing him to a radiant sun.<sup>19</sup>

18 Firishta, [Muḥammad Qāsim Hindūshāh Astarābādī], *Tārīkh-e Fereshte, From Ādelshāhīyān to Barīdshāhīyān*, ed. Muḥammad Rezā Nasirī (Tehran: Society for the Appreciation of Cultural Works and Dignitaries, 2014), Vol. III, 1-16, although the claim was also made by some Portuguese authors as early as the sixteenth century. High-born Ottoman origins have been widely discredited among Western scholars, although many Turkish, Iranian and South Asian scholars still support the narrative: see İsmail Hikmet Ertaylan, *Ādilshāhler, Hindistan'da bir Türk-Islām Devleti* (Istanbul: Sermet Matbaası, 1953), which curiously omits any mention of Gāwān, dating "Bahmanid decay" to the 1460s. As for the Hungarian claim, it seems to have been made by several Portuguese authors, including Garcia da Orta's equally magnificent and infamous *Colóquios dos simples e drogas da Índia*, first printed in Goa in 1563. For a level-headed contribution on the claim of central European origins made by Portuguese sources, see Lajos Kropf, "Clarimundus Czászár Krónikája 1520 (Egy állítólag magyarból fordított munka)," *Századok* 21 (1887), 173-5. Kropf's subsequent return to the topic, "Melique Verido," *Századok* 53-54 (1919-20), was unfortunately not accessible to me at the time of writing. The topic of western Asian and Anatolian identities and skills in India, real as well as imputed, will be addressed in my upcoming monograph.

19 Almost inevitably, these authors are consulted in English translations edited by R.H. Major, *India in the Fifteenth Century: being a collection of narratives of voyages to India* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1857), 26-9, although decent editions of the primary sources are now available for all of them. For Nikitin, see Afanasii Nikitin, *Khozhenie za Tri Morya Afasaniya Nikitina 1466-1472gg, Troitskii Spisok, XVI v.*, ed. B. Grekov and v. Andrianova-Peretts (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo akademii nauk SSSR, 1948), 16-17 and more extensively 26-30, where he refers to the abundance and magnanimity he witnessed in the realm of "the Khurasani boyar Meliktuchar" (*Хоросанец меликтуچارъ боярин*, i.e. Gāwān), also see footnote 109, which states that Gāwān eliminated Khvāja Jahān Turk in order to assume absolute power in the realm. For 'Abd al-Razzāq Samarqandī, see his *Maṭla'-i Sa'dayn va Majma'-i Bahrayn*, ed. 'Abd al-Ḥusayn Navā'ī (Tehrān: Pizhūhishgāh-i 'Ulūm-i Insānī va Muṭāla'āt-i Farhangī, 2004), Vol. II/1, 587; unlike the Vijayanagara sections, the one on virtuous men of Gilan has not been translated into English.

The laudatory tradition continued as Indo-Muslim authors of the following two centuries explicitly viewed Gāwān as a virtuous ascetic and a martyr. In his *Burhān al-Ma'āsir*, Ṭabāṭabā claimed that upon Gāwān's death it was revealed that in spite of public pomp he sustained himself on the 40,000 *lāris* which he had initially brought from Iran, rather than touching the royal treasury; Firish-ta also reported extensively on the dramatic nature of Gāwān's execution and on his ascetic proclivities, heaping scorn on Bahmani rulers.<sup>20</sup> A few decades later, the chronicler Ulughkhānī, writing in Arabic for his Gujarati Abyssinian patrons, included information about Gāwān's death, which was caused by a ten-person cabal composed of Turk and Abyssinian notables who rode on praised Arab horses to arrest the unwitting Gāwān on trumped-up charges of collaboration with the raja of Orissa. Ulughkhānī concludes by saying that Gāwān "lived in a felicitous way and died as a martyr" (*fa-āsha sa'īdan wa māta shahīdan*).<sup>21</sup>

Gāwān's fate resonated all the way to Egypt and Mecca, where his contemporary al-Sakhāwī, who had been taught by the same renowned teacher, Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, included a long entry about him in his biographical dictionary, with a somewhat uneven focus first on Gāwān's earlier life as a scholar and then on his dramatic demise. He does not mention the colourful detail which was later related by Firish-ta concerning a drunken Abyssinian seal-bearer who participated in the plot against Gāwān, but in his version Gāwān is still tricked by a letter when he assembles an army which is said by his enemies to be directed against his rule.<sup>22</sup>

The only known exception to the received lore of Gāwān as a grievously wronged man is the last letter which the Ottomans received from the Bahmanis as a response to their praise of recently established commercial ties with India. In its last part, dictated by the sultan, the justly punished Gāwān is portrayed as spiteful and unwilling to admit his guilt, while his accusers are lauded. We know the readers were not convinced; for instance, an Ottoman

20 The two major Islamic sources from the Deccan are both partial to Gāwān, yet they still require a close comparative reading beyond mere positivistic ascertaining of the dates, places and names. Ṭabāṭabā, *Burhān-i Ma'āsir*, ed. Sayyid Hāshimī Farīdābādī (Hyderabad: Maṭba'at Jāmi'ah Dihlī, 1936), 91-132 and Firish-ta, *Tarikh-e Fereshte*, Vol. 11, 421-69.

21 Ḥajji al-Dabīr Ulughkhānī, *An Arabic history of Gujarat: Zafar ul-wāliḥ bi Muẓaffar wa-āliḥ*, ed. E. Denison Ross (London: J. Murray, 1910-28), Vol. 1, 167. The term "Abyssinian" is used here, in spite of its historical "baggage", to include people from today's Ethiopia and Eritrea – much as "India" is used to indicate South Asia as a whole.

22 Al-Sakhāwī, *al-Ḍaw' al-lāmi' li-ahl al-qarn al-tāsī'* (Beirut: Dār al-Jil, 1966), Vol. x, 144-5.

manuscript adds a note about Gāwān, stating that he died as a martyr (*tuwuffi-ya shahīdan*).<sup>23</sup>

#### 4 Glimpses from the Letters

In spite of the value of the sources we enumerated above, some of the mystique around Gāwān can only be dispelled by reading his own work closely. The printed edition of *Riyāz al-Inshā'*, published in 1948, has its flaws – some of which will be discussed below – but it also features a valuable extensive summary of the letters in Urdu, facilitating the initial encounter with Gāwān's scintillating, yet often obscurantist, prose. The collection includes 148 letters, 27 of which were addressed to various rulers across the Islamic world.<sup>24</sup>

Particularly fascinating are a few letters which were composed and dispatched during the long campaign along the Konkani coast from Chaul to Goa in the 1470s. Even in the midst of war Gāwān displays a refined sensitivity in his perception of the landscape, observing the copious water sources and an abundance of orchards and gardens – especially rich with sugarcane (*nai-shakar*), coconut palms (*ashjār-i nārjīl*), betel nuts (*tambūl*) and areca nuts (*siparī*) – and yet, simultaneously, he expresses a desire to clear the jungle and build roads.<sup>25</sup> Along with the presence of Gāwān's own immigrant body, another superimposed piece of Gilan emerges in the Deccani landscape by his act of naming a fortress Sangisar (modern-day Ratnagarh). In a pattern as old as migration, Gāwān overcomes elements of alienation and threat stemming from the unfamiliar Konkani geography by equating it with the familiar landscapes of Damavand and Mazandaran, which he calls Tabaristan, following the Arabic preference: in his mind, those areas are similarly resistant to conquest since are all densely forested (the versatility of the term *jāngal* certainly helped) and mountainous.<sup>26</sup>

In the letters dispatched to the Gilani court, which narrate the events of the campaign, Gāwān emphasises the achievements of his newcomer troops,

23 See Ferīdūn Bey, *Mecmū'a-i Münşe'at-i Selāṭīn* (Istanbul: Takvīmhāne-i 'Āmire, 1274-75 [1858]), Vol. II, 258-62 for a letter from Gāwān and its Ottoman response; 299-301 for correspondence with the Bahmanis after Gāwān's execution, accusing him of fostering corruption (*fasād*) and pledging that the amicable relations with the Ottomans could continue without him. For the manuscript, see Maḥmūd Gāwān, *Riyāz al-Inshā'*, MS Süleymaniye Library Istanbul, Haletefendi 380.

24 Gāwān, *Riyāz al-Inshā'*.

25 Ibid., 181 (Letter 46); also, see 70-6 (Letter 13).

26 Ibid., 157-65 (Letter 39). The comparison with Iranian landscapes occurs on page 161.

naming them in a specific order and starting with the Turkish ones. Unlike the sources from sixteenth-century Gujarat, which distinguish rather neatly between Central Asian Turks and mostly Rumi and sometimes Iraqi Turkmen newcomers, Gāwān's preference is for the general term *fattāk-i atrāk*, perhaps because the uniform name of "Turks" had been used in classical Arabic sources which he studied in his youth, or because he was aware of the ability of Rumis and Central Asian Turks to communicate with each other in spite of their regional and cultural differences.

*Fattāk* is most likely used in its semantic restriction as the epithet "intrepid" or even "heroic" rather than the common meaning of "robbers" – although, given the underlying themes of taming a wild and strange landscape, one of the connotations might be that the formerly unruly Turkmen are now employed for a good cause and transformed into heroes. After lauding the Turks, presumably of Iranian-Anatolian provenance, he moves on to the "noble Arabs" (*najab-i Arab*), and Kurdish (for some reason, dubbed as the less glorious *afrād-i akrād*) soldiers in the Bahmani army, also playfully stressing the importance of "lions" (*shīrān*) and "braves" (*dilīrān*) from two settlements from Bushahr province, Shul and Ghul, as well as the ferocious "lion-cubs" (*āshbāl bīsha*) from his native Gilan. All of them combined are evidently as irresistible as formidable forces of nature, such as the billows of the sea or the thunder; Gāwān finally ends the enumeration by returning the emphasis to the *ghilāmān-i Turk* (perhaps this second mention indeed refers to Central Asian Turks; it is not clear why else he would mention Turks twice in a paragraph and all other forces only once), adding the *hubūsh* to their ranks. The enumeration of these various ethno-social groups might not constitute a mere device of literary flourish in this context, abstractly evoking the formidable diversity of diasporic soldiers primarily for the sake of a sense of aesthetic wonder; instead, the act of listing the specificity of Turkish, Kurdish, Arab and Gilani origins may actually constitute a covert yet concrete appeal to draft men from all those various areas and backgrounds, including pastoralist ones, due to their complementary skills with arms and horses.<sup>27</sup>

Similarly, in a letter addressed to Muʿin al-Dīn Jahān Shāh Lārī, Gāwān congratulated him on his "conquest" of Hormuz, asking him for assistance with the campaign on Vijayanagara by sending arms, ammunition, horses and men who are willing to fight. Gāwān's affinity for *sajʿ* rhymed prose obliged him once again to speak of the symmetrical *fattāk-i atrāk ū javānān-i chalāk*. Here we see a gradual but significant shift; in Gāwān's time, the epicentre of migration to India was obviously the Persian Gulf, but the ripples widened eventually to

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 162 (Letter 39).

include men from across the region, including eastern Anatolia and the Caucasus.<sup>28</sup>

The other aspect of Gāwān's correspondence which has often been neglected, and which speaks for his pragmatism rather than any elevation of the Ottomans as caliphs, is his enthusiasm for Uzun Ḥasan. In contrast to the frequently evoked but probably less significant Ottoman connection, the only scholar who has emphasised Aqqoyunlu and Bahmani linkages was J. Aubin in a brief article from 1971.<sup>29</sup> Writing to the Gilani court from Goa in 1472, Gāwān praised Uzun Ḥasan for his foresight and intelligence (*'aql-i dūrbīn*) because he prevailed over rebellions to institute order upon the roads in his domain, which now allowed for the sending of presents and envoys.<sup>30</sup> However, letters written directly to Aqqoyunlu rulers have been relegated to obscurity and misattributed through their location towards the end of the collection under ambiguous subheadings, probably because the original compiler of the *Rīyāz al-Inshā'* after Gāwān's death either could not or did not wish to identify their addressees.<sup>31</sup>

Giosafat Barbaro attested the presence of an Indian embassy whose members he encountered in 1474 at the Aqqoyunlu court, but without specifying its point of origin, perhaps because he was too entranced by their animals; it is quite certain that they were Persians in the service of Bahmanis.<sup>32</sup> Relations between the two realms continued to thrive even after the deaths of Gāwān and the Bahmani sultan, because we know that the son of Idrīs Bitlīsī, Abū'l-Faẓl Muḥammad Daftārī, in his own collection included letters which specify several embassies between the lands of Ya'qūb Beg, Uzun Ḥasan's successor, and those of the Bahmanis as late as 1485.<sup>33</sup> A precise discussion of Maḥmūd Gāwān's interactions with Ottomans and wider Anatolia must include all of

28 Ibid., 207 (Letter 57). Also, see Jean Aubin, "Le royaume d'Ormuz au début du xv<sup>e</sup> siècle," *Mare Luso-Indicum* 2 (1972), 134 – in particular the extensive footnote 334, which corrects two editing errors concerning this letter.

29 Jean Aubin, "Les relations diplomatiques entre les Aq-Qoyunlu et les Bahmanides," in C.E. Bosworth (ed.), *Iran and Islam, in memory of the late Vladimir Minorsky* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1971), 11-15.

30 Gāwān, *Rīyāz al-Inshā'*, 164 (Letter 39), albeit calling him "Ḥusayn Beg".

31 Ibid., Letters 133 and 135.

32 In Barbaro's words, "Vennero in questo mezo alcuni con certi animali che erano stati mandate da un signore di India; el primo delquali fu una leonza [...], dietro poi à questo furono menati due elephanti [...] dappoi una Giraffa", in *Viaggi fatti da Venetia [sic] alla Tana, in Persia, in India et in Constantinopoli* (Venice: Aldus, 1545), 35. A feast was organised in honour of the two ambassadors, who were made to sit in front of the Aqqoyunlu sultan ("furono fatti molto honoreuoli triumpho [...] uennero li dui ambasciatori d'India, i quali furono posti à sentire per mezo il signore"), idem, 36.

33 Aubin, "Les relations diplomatiques".

these threads, as well as his letters to the rulers of Gilan, Egypt and Iraq – all of which were significant nodal points in the political and economic world of the Indian Ocean.

## 5 The Caliphate as a Common Currency

Let us briefly address the thorny issue of the caliphate. Ever since the nineteenth century and the demise of the Mughals, South Asian Muslims have embraced the idea that Ottomans had been unanimously recognised as caliphs at least since their conquest of the Holy Cities. Within the same narrative, it is supposed that every single Muslim ruler from South and Southeast Asia who wrote to the Ottomans since the sixteenth century did so with the intention of genuinely pleading with them to assist him against rapacious Europeans, and that the Ottomans, imbued with equally honest feelings of solidarity, wanted to help but were not able to do so for material reasons. While emotionally and psychologically understandable, this interpretation is completely flawed, compressing centuries of vastly different interactions across Asia into one simple cliché.

Within the modern South Asian context, the image of Gāwān as a doomed visionary is all too tempting, evoking strong echoes of Tīpū Sulṭān's fate some 400 years later: in both cases, they can be interpreted as far-sighted rulers who wanted to establish links with the Ottoman caliphs and Europe but who were ignominiously thwarted by higher powers. The most egregious example of this line of teleological thinking, once again conflating centuries into one cinematic moment of failed resistance, was displayed by S. Abdurrashid, who was a South Asian guest at the Turkish history congress in Ankara in 1961. His contribution gloomily concludes that no "active or fruitful commercial contacts" between Anatolia and India were ever possible because of the coming of the Portuguese, even though the interactions between the Ottomans and the Bahmanis predate the arrival of the Portuguese by more than thirty years!<sup>34</sup>

In addition to being simply wrong about Vasco da Gama as a crucial *deus ex machina* device of history, such self-flagellating perspectives of an eternal and inevitable colonialism obscure many other fascinating realities in the *moyenne durée* of Ottoman contact with South Asia – for instance, the fact that the textile trade with India probably peaked as late as the eighteenth century, and

34 S. Abdurrashid, "Ottoman-Mughul Relations during the Seventeenth Century," in *Bildiri Özetleri: VI. Türk Tarih Kongresi, 20-26 Ekim 1961, Ankara. VI. Türk Tarih Kongresi, 111. Seksyon* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1967), 533-45.

that more people from the Indian subcontinent (including men and women of aristocratic and humble origins) settled down in Ottoman domains in the nineteenth century than ever before. But those stories must be told elsewhere.

As for a seemingly “natural” alliance between Ottomans and other Muslim rulers against western Europeans, in most instances it is no more than another *topos*, absent from the bulk of Ottoman–Mughal correspondence in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (except for a veiled Ottoman request for financial assistance against Austria from Aurangzeb); instead, these exchanges largely consist of cantankerous discussions of appropriate titlature – especially so under the Mughal Shāh Jahān. When the weakened Mughals asked for help, it was against Nādir Shāh, not western Europeans, and they were still unwilling to concede supremacy to the Ottomans, except in convoluted fashion in one of their last attested letters in the 1740s.

Crucially, even in the late eighteenth century, Tīpū Sulṭān never addressed the Ottomans as caliphs either; incidentally, Irfan Habib was able to infer as much without having read the letters or a Turkish article which includes a facsimile of Tīpū’s Persian letter and its late eighteenth-century Ottoman translation.<sup>35</sup> As with so many other aspects of Anatolian–South Asian interactions, the most accessible interpretations tend to combine dramatic realities of the first half of the sixteenth century with those of post-1857 northern India, while ignoring the more tangled contradictions of the centuries between those two nodal points.

If we read Maḥmūd Gāwān’s letters to the Ottoman court literally, as most scholars have done, he becomes anachronistically reduced to a mere symbol and a precursor of later dynamics rather than being seen as an agent in his own right and belonging to his own time. Furthermore, the crude binary of a European-versus-Asian clash of interests ignores some of the real hinderances in communication between the two courts, most notably the experience of the Bahmani embassy from 1485 whose goods were seized in Jeddah by the Mamluks, provoking yet another confrontation between the Mamluks and the Ottomans.<sup>36</sup>

35 See Irfan Habib, “Introduction” in Irfan Habib (ed.), *State and Diplomacy under Tipu Sultan, Documents and Essays* (New Delhi: Tulika Books, 2001), ix–xxv. For more on Tīpū–Ottoman interaction, see Maya Petrovich, “Land of the Foreign Padishah: India in Ottoman Reality and Imagination,” PhD dissertation, Princeton University, 2012, 393–405.

36 Tursun Bey, *Tārīh-i Ebū’l-Feth*, ed. A. Mertol Tulum (Istanbul: Baha Matbaası, 1977), 196f. Elsewhere in the text, rather amusingly, Tursun Beg attempts to establish a certain parity between Temūr’s conquest of northern India and the Ottoman conquest of the western and central Balkan lands, including Bosnia. The incident in which the Bahmani embassy was held up by the Mamluk authorities was also reported by the Cairene chronicler Ibn



How, then, *should* we read Letter number 5 in the printed edition of *Riyāz al-Inshā'*, commonly assumed to be the first letter from the Bahmanis to the Ottomans and purportedly sent on the occasion of Fātiḥ's conquest of Constantinople and clairvoyantly using the term *khilāfa* decades before the battle of Ridaniyya in 1518, which brought Egypt and the Hijaz into the Ottoman fold?<sup>37</sup>

First of all, no scholar before Richard Eaton seems to have pointed out that Gāwān had just arrived in India as a horse merchant in 1453, the very year in which Istanbul was conquered by the Ottomans. To that, we can add that Gāwān was only able to address the Ottoman rulers in an official capacity after his rise to power, which happened in 1460s. The victories exalted by the letter must therefore refer to different campaigns, or to the general prowess of Meḥmed Fātiḥ in military matters, rather than to Istanbul itself.

Second, the letter mentions previous correspondence with the Ottomans – either there is a missing first letter, or the traditional chronology of the ones we have is wrong. Third, and most importantly, the term “caliph” applied to the Ottomans by Gāwān does not imply any sort of an absolute and encompassing claim. As we know, Gāwān had discreet yet visible Shi'a sympathies, while the Ottomans were at that time concentrated upon expanding into the Balkans, not claiming any universal rule beyond the regions held by their imperial centre. They did not rule over eastern Anatolia either, in spite of their recent victory over Uzun Ḥasan.

In Gāwān's time, designating someone as a holder of the caliphate must have meant little more than a gracious compliment. Notably, he employs it generously – also addressing many other correspondents as caliphs, including the ruler of his native Gilan. Yet another example of his use of the term is its application to the sultan Ḥasan Beg of Iraq, interpreted by J. Aubin as Uzun Ḥasan himself. A fleeting reading of the line *sarīr-i sipīhr-i salṭanat ū khilāfat*

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Iyās in *Badā'ī' al-Zuhūr fi Waqā'ī' al-Duhūr*, ed. Paul Kahle and Muḥammad Muṣṭafā (Istanbul: Maṭba'at al-Dawla, 1936), Vol. III, 210.

37 Readings of those letters at their most literal level appear even in the otherwise excellent article by M.A. Nayeem, “Foreign Cultural Relations of the Bahmanis (1461-81 AD),” in P.M. Joshi, M.A. Nayeem (eds), *Studies in the foreign relations of India, Prof. H.K. Sherwani Felicitation Volume* (Hyderabad, India: State Archives, Government of Andhra Pradesh, 1975), 397-8. Naimur Rahman Farooqi includes two insightful passages on the letters included in Feridūn Bey's collection, but he inexplicably ignores the *Riyāz al-Inshā'* in his monograph, *Mughal-Ottoman Relations: A Study of Political & Diplomatic Relations between Mughal India and the Ottoman Empire, 1556-1748* (New Delhi: Idarah-i Adabiyat-i Delli, 1989), 11f. For the letters themselves, see Gāwān, *Riyāz al-Inshā'*, 33-6 (Letter 5), 391-3 (Letter 143) and 393-8 (Letter 144). I hope to address the sequencing of these letters and their context in a future publication.

had led the editors to misattribute it in the printed edition as being addressed to the Ottomans; incidentally, that mistake could only be corrected by checking the letter against Istanbul manuscripts.<sup>38</sup>

Our conclusion is that there was a proliferation of the term “caliph” in the fifteenth century as it was interpreted in a generous sense, additive rather than exclusive. The title subsequently “appreciated” in value, becoming jealously contested in the seventeenth century.<sup>39</sup> In other words, rather than a forgotten term which was dusted off in the nineteenth century for Ottoman ideological purposes, throughout the late medieval and early modern period the term “caliph” remained a dynamic concept whose interpretation and hegemonic weight varied from decade to decade and court to court.

## 6 Some Paths between the Universal and the Particular

Beyond a eulogistic depiction of a talented man and his times, the wide scope of Maḥmūd Gāwān’s writings and actions offers a starting point for fresh investigations which open up vistas on world and global history without forsaking a steady focus on regional analyses.

First, how do we expand current debates on the Persianate world to avoid marginalising or excluding communication with those parts of the Islamic world where Persian was present but not hegemonic, such as the Arab side of the Persian Gulf, the Ottoman empire and the Malay cultural sphere? How do we calibrate Gāwān’s letters in Persian to the rulers of Anatolia, Egypt and Iraq with his obvious mastery of Arabic scholarship, acquired during the first part of his exile? Speaking of the Timurid court, we also need to investigate when and how Ottomans ceased to fully partake in the Persianate sphere<sup>40</sup> and how

38 Gāwān, *Riyāz al-Inshāʾ*, Letter 56, 201-5. For the correction, see Nizamuddin Maghribi, “Riyāz al-Inshāʾ ke qalamī naskhe Istanbul meḥ,” 308 (footnote 3 at the end of the article).

39 Azmi Özcan, *Pan-Islamism, Indian Muslims, the Ottomans and Britain (1877-1924)* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 1, footnote no. 2; also, see the section on Gāwān in Petrovich, “Land of the Foreign Padishah,” 135-42. For recent analyses of Ottoman claims to the caliphate, compare Mona Hassan, *Longing for the Lost Caliphate: A Transregional History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2017) and Hüseyin Yılmaz, *Caliphate Redefined: The Mystical Turn in Ottoman Political Thought* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018).

40 If this claim sounds exaggerated, the reader should consider that the Ottoman chancellery routinely responded in elaborate Persian to Maḥmūd Gāwān; understood Persian, yet preferred Ottoman when writing to the Mughals two centuries later; and, finally, routinely supplied (sometimes lightly and sometimes heavily) modified Ottoman translations of correspondences with Nādir Shāh and, especially, Tīpū Sultān. This means that at the latest in the eighteenth century, Persian became a specialised and individualised skill as

this process relates to the cultural, if not political, hegemony of Herat and its own Turkic variety of Chaghatay Turki, which in Gāwān's own time might have appeared as a much stronger candidate for forging inter-Turkic links across central and South Asia – and probably Iran and Anatolia as well.<sup>41</sup>

Second, there is the crucial question of inter-ethnic alliances, particularly as it pertains to Abyssinians. As we know, Gāwān's seal-bearer and the executioner who killed him were both *ḥabashīs* (Abyssinians), in accordance with the observation that within the Bahmani context they tended to ally with the *daknīs* rather than the newcomers. However, when we consider the sultanate of Gujarat, we find that *ḥabashīs* there tend to be closely affiliated with the Rumis, to the extent of acquiring the soubriquet of *rūmī khānīs*, as in the case of the patron of the small but exquisite Sidi Sayyid mosque in Ahmedabad.<sup>42</sup> Another notable *ḥabashī*, who accompanied the family of Selman Reis to Gujarat – Jhūjhār Khān Marjān – spoke Anatolian Turkish fluently and was known for his predilection for cursing in it. These neglected communities, scattered around western and southern India, deserve as much historiographic attention as those of Turks, Rumis and Iranians, even before the rise of Malik Ambar.<sup>43</sup>

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opposed to a firm administrative requirement, perhaps similar to the decreasing value of solid knowledge of French in the late twentieth-century Atlantic world (as opposed to its high importance in the nineteenth). One tentative step in this direction was made by M. Petrovich, “Urfi would throw his verses into the fire: The Ottoman retreat from Persianness” (unpublished manuscript, presented at Winter School, *Zukunftspilologie*, Delhi, 2012).

41 For recent scholarship on Central Asian Turkic immigrants to India (although not the Deccan itself), see Ismail K. Poonawala (ed.), *Turks in the Indian Subcontinent, Central and West Asia* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2017), particularly Part III and the contributions by Sunil Kumar and Benedek Péri.

42 Note that the *nisba*, which signalled that the Abyssinian *rūmī khānīs* were still seen as clients of the respective *rūmī khān*. In practice, they were already an independent political force in the Gujarat of the 1540s.

43 Notable studies of elite as well as non-elite Africans in India include, among others, Shihan da Silva Jayasuriya and Richard Pankhurst (eds), *The African Diaspora in the Indian Ocean* (Trenton, NJ/Asmara: Africa World Press, 2006), 189-222 for a general framework; Kenneth X. Robbins and John McLeod (eds), *African Elites in India: Habshi Amarat* (Ahmedabad: Mapin Publishing, 2006), 145-61 for the Sidi Sayyid mosque; B.G. Tamaskar, *The Life and Work of Malik Ambar* (New Delhi: Idarah-i Adabiyat-i Delli, 1978); Radhey Shyam, *Life and Times of Malik Ambar* (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1968); and, most recently, Omar H. Ali, *Malik Ambar: Power and Slavery across the Indian Ocean* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016) and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, “Between Eastern Africa and Western India, 1500-1650: Slavery, Commerce, and Elite Formation,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 61/4 (2019), 805-34. For an ethnographic perspective, see Helene Basu, *Habshi-Sklaven, Sidi Fakire: Muslimische Heiligenverehrung im westlichen Indien* (Berlin: Das arabische Buch, 1995).

This means that all of us who study migration to medieval and early modern Muslim India must walk a fine line between the general and the specific: we cannot merely content ourselves with juxtaposing the north and its more accessible hegemonic layers, created first by the Delhi sultanates and then by the Mughals, versus a linguistically and culturally more complex, and yet underexplored, Deccani south. Rather, we need to closely examine differences and similarities for each particular South Asian court, including a wide range of diasporas and not merely the seductive and highly literate layer of Persian-writing émigrés (who in many cases would have carried with them an earlier substratum of yet another regional and linguistic identity – such as Kurdish, Turkish or Georgian – obscured by the general and more prestigious Iranian identity).

Third, how might we develop readings of physical and conceptual spaces as perceived by the newcomers? Gāwān's fascination with Konkani flora – which encompasses the sensual nature of his encounter with the frontiers of the Persianate world, as well as a contradictory “civilizing impulse” to dominate and reshape that very landscape – is reminiscent of the wide-eyed Spanish *conquistadores* facing the realm of the Mēxihcah, or Hān Chinese perceptions of their own alien frontier in the “far south”: Nányuè aka Vietnam. Such contradictions of simultaneous desires either to surrender to the pleasures and the novelty of the frontier environment, or else to dominate it through a violent reshaping need to be highlighted and explored in order to understand the dual mentality of immigrants and potential colonisers within very different, yet related late medieval and early modern cultural and social frameworks.<sup>44</sup>

Similar, although less articulate, reactions might have surfaced in the case of maverick former Ottoman Muṣṭafā b. Bayrām or Behnām (note that the Persian rather than the Turkish name is the one that he bore once he arrived in India) on his journeys from his native Mediterranean coast to Yemen, and subsequently to Gujarat and Rajasthan. Visiting the Ranthambore fortress – which Muṣṭafā besieged twice in the 1530s, and which is perched atop a high hill overlooking one of India's most visited tiger reserves – provokes genuine awe of those men and their accomplishments, although they were murderous mercenaries. Could we develop a technique of comparative reading of those same militarised landscapes from contemporaneous literary sources in Persian and Urdu as well as, say, Sanskrit, Marathi and Kannada – particularly in those cases in which Deccani sultanates actively promoted expression in those Indic

44 Bernal Díaz del Castillo, *Historia verdadera de la conquista de la Nueva España*, ed. Miguel León-Portilla (Madrid: Historia 16, 1984) and Edward Hetzel Schafer, *The Vermillion Bird: Tang Images of the South* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1967).

languages? Such analyses, rooted both in the sensuous and the intellectual realms, are sorely needed in order to grasp the layered subtlety of supposedly “hybrid” works such as the *Kitāb-i Nauras* by Ibrāhīm ‘Ādilshāh II (d. 1627).<sup>45</sup>

Certainly Maḥmūd Gāwān had to wrestle with many such dilemmas, at least implicitly engaging in constant negotiations between the customary and consolatory patterns of memory and the fresh realities of exile – painful as well as exhilarating. The life and works of that remarkable man – a scholar, warrior, merchant and perhaps even a peculiar mystic or a saint – provide one distinctive and layered path into the labyrinth of the high medieval and early modern Indian Ocean and Islamic worlds. To borrow a category from Native American studies: he was a shape-shifter if there ever was one, and his experience and knowledge still resonate across centuries.<sup>46</sup>

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45 Ibrahīm ‘Ādilshāh II [sic], *Kitāb-i Nauras*, ed. Nazir Ahmad (New Delhi: Bharatiya Kala Kendra, 1956). As indicated in its title, the work in Daknī Urdu comprises elements of high Persianate aesthetics (*nau-ras* as derived from the verb *rasīdan*) and Indic *rasa* theories. Also, see Navina Najat Haidar, “The Kitāb-i Nauras: Key to Bijapur’s Golden Age,” in Navina Najat Haidar and Marika Sardar (eds), *Sultans of the South: Arts of India’s Deccan Courts, 1323-1687* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2011), 26-43. For a closer look at the importance of botany as an indicator of emotional states, see the idiosyncratic but highly valuable monograph by Niels Hammer, *The Art of Sanskrit Poetry: An Introduction to Language and Poetics, Illustrated by Rasaḥ, Dhvaniḥ and Alaṅkāraḥ Analyses* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 2003).

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## The Trouble with Lineage: On Why the Timurid Prince Muḥammad Zamān Mīrzā Did Not Become Emperor

*Ali Anooshahr*

We are often tempted to think along teleologies established by pre-modern chroniclers when we search for the origins of “states”. The actions of certain individuals are inevitably extracted from their context and arranged to fit as neatly as possible into a series of diachronic links that lead up to an identifiable moment when the state is seen to be securely in existence. What is often overlooked is the preponderance of similar events at the moment of origination that are forgotten and ignored as they failed to succeed in achieving their goals. The latter individuals are deprioritised soon after their deaths. Their efforts are marginalised and demonised in the construction of historical memory and their records are barely preserved, if at all.

The history of the Mughal empire presents a good case in point. All modern surveys begin with the career of Ṣahīr al-Dīn Muḥammad Bābur, the Central Asian prince who carved out a realm for himself in Kabul and subsequently took control over North India after two major battles in 1525 and 1527.<sup>1</sup> A number of biographies have been written on his life; his makeshift state has been the subject of study; and the main historical records on his life (most famously an autobiographical memoir) have been translated and edited many times, starting in the sixteenth century.<sup>2</sup> In contrast, Bābur’s cousin Mīrzā Ḥaydar Dughlāt, whose life closely parallels Bābur’s, has received far less

1 Wolseley Haig and Richard Burn, *The Cambridge History of India, Vol. 1v: The Mughul Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1937); John Richards, *The Mughal Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Michael H. Fisher, *A Short History of the Mughal Empire* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2015).

2 Translations into Persian by Shaykh Zayn Khvāfi, *Ṭabaqāt-i Bāburī*, British Library, Ms Or. 1999 and by ‘Abd al-Raḥīm Khān-i Khānān (see Thackston, below); into English by Anette S. Beveridge, *The Babar-Nama: Being the Autobiography of the Emperor Babar, the Founder of the Moghul Dynasty in India, written in Chaghatay Turkish* (London: Gibb Memorial Series, 1905); and W.M. Thackston, *Bāburnāma: Chaghatay Turkish Text with Abdul-Rahim Khankhanan’s Persian Translation* (Cambridge, MA: Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, Harvard University, 1993); Eiji Mano, *Bābur-Nāma (Vaḳāyi’): Critical Edition Based on Four Chaghatay Texts* (Kyoto: Shōkadō, 2006).

attention than that of his more famous kinsman – even though Mīrzā Ḥaydar also lived a life of exile and adventure, conquered a kingdom (Kashmir) and authored a large volume of history with much autobiographical detail.<sup>3</sup> This relative neglect is no doubt the result of the fact that Mīrzā Ḥaydar's state in Kashmir did not survive its founder's death. Still another Central Asian notable, Zu'l-Nūn Arghūn, did not leave behind a memoir but he and his descendants were able to form a kingdom in the lower Indus valley (Sindh and Thatta) that lasted (in various forms) for about a century, until its final incorporation into the Mughal empire. In this case the conversion of the Arghūn kingdom into a Mughal province probably explains its neglect, as its provincial status and hence its relative insignificance in the seventeenth century is projected backward to the sixteenth century and seen as unworthy of engaged study.

Needless to say, a broader synchronic investigation of the events of the early sixteenth century in Central and South Asia would provide much-needed context and better understanding of Bābur and his activities. While the limited space of the present chapter cannot adequately address the task outlined above (that would require separate volumes), I intend a more modest attempt involving a Timurid prince who was more prominent though ultimately far less successful than his Central Asian counterparts in South Asia. The person in question is Muḥammad Zamān Mīrzā, son of Badī' al-Zamān Mīrzā and grandson of Sultan Ḥusayn Bāyqarā, the most prominent and senior Timurid ruler by the end of the fifteenth century, who ranked far above Bābur's grandfather, Abū Sa'īd Mīrzā.

Muḥammad Zamān's career is worth studying because it shows the extent and limits of Timurid prestige, which was also claimed or contested by Bābur and his descendants. However, while the Bāburids made selective use of this legacy alongside a host of other such traditions rooted in the past (such as that of *ghāzī* kings or, later, of heroic models based on Indian epics), Muḥammad Zamān Mīrzā only claimed seniority or the right to rule based on his specific Timurid ancestry. This was an easy though perhaps unimaginative way for the mīrzā to assert his authority as he was the only surviving male descendant of Ḥusayn Bāyqarā. What is more, his credentials based on pedigree were understood by all those with whom he had any significant political dealings: the Safavids of Iran; local notables in Afghanistan; the Timurids of India; Sultan Bahādur of Gujarat; and even Nuno da Cunha, the Portuguese governor of Diu.

3 Translation E. Denison Ross, *A History of the Moghuls of Central Asia; being the Tārīkh-i-Rashīdī of Mirza Muhammad Haidar Dughlāt*, ed. N. Elias (1898, reprint New York: Barnes and Noble, 1972); W.H. Thackston, *Mirza Haydar Dughlat's Tārīkh-i Rashīdī: A History of the Khans of Moghulistan* (Cambridge, MA: Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, Harvard University, 1996); Mirza Haydar Dughlat, *Tārīkh-i Rashīdī*, ed. 'Abbās Qulī Ghaffārī Fard (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Mīrāth-i Maktūb, 2004).

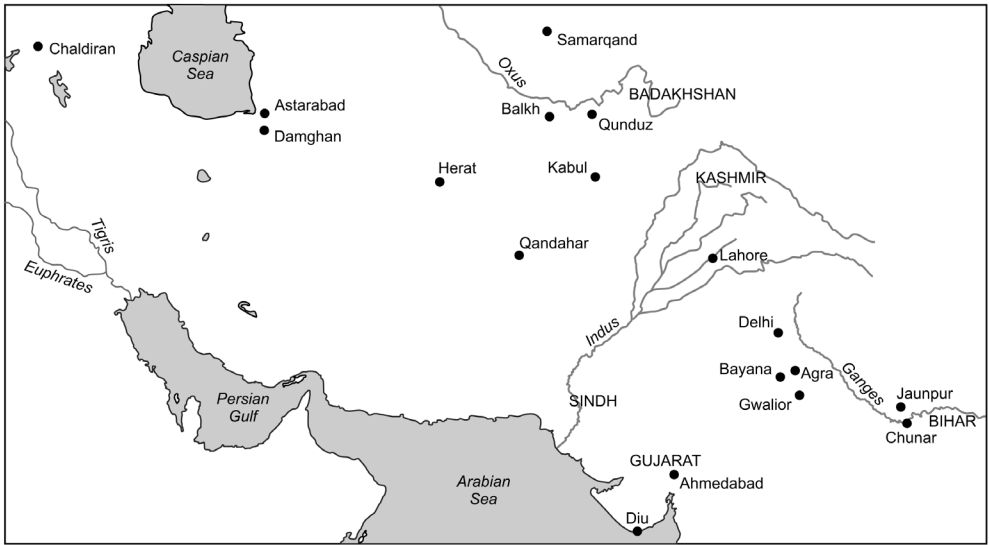


FIGURE 5.1 Map of localities in North India and Iran associated with Prince Mīrzā Zamān's career

In short, he enjoyed a position of privilege according to the rules of a political discourse that was shared across Eurasia. This was basically a patron-and-client relationship involving “service” (*khidmat* in Persian, and *serve* or *merçe* in Portuguese) that bound a social inferior to a social superior based on a mutual contractual relationship.<sup>4</sup>

This assertion may seem both obvious and counterintuitive. Much recent scholarship has been harnessed to argue that the discourse that tied various cultures across Eurasia in this period was millenarianism.<sup>5</sup> This is true in some cases, especially in the later sixteenth century. However, the various

4 See the discussion by Jürgen Paul, “*Khidma* in the Social History of pre-Mongol Iran,” *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 57 (2014), 392-422 as well as his *Lokale und imperiale Herrschaft im Iran des 12. Jahrhunderts: Herrschaftspraxis und Konzepte* (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 2016), especially 231-58. A useful study of an Iberian case is Sidney M. Greenfield and Infante D. Pedro, “The Patrimonial State and Patron-Client Relations in Iberia and Latin America: Sources of ‘The System’ in the Fifteenth-Century Writings of the Infante D. Pedro of Portugal,” *Ethnohistory* 24/2 (1977), 163-78.

5 See most recently Sanjay Subrahmanyam, “Turning the Stones Over: Sixteenth-Century Millenarianism from the Tagus to the Ganges,” *Indian Economic and Social History Review* 40/2 (2003), 129-61; İlker Evrim Binbaş, “Timurid Experimentation with Eschatological Absolutism: Mīrzā Iskandar, Shāh Ni‘matullāh Walī, and Sayyid Sharif Jurjānī in 815/1412,” in Orhan Mir-Kasimov (ed.), *Unity in Diversity: Mysticism, Messianism and the Construction of Religious Authority in Islam* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 277-303; C.H. Fleischer, “A Mediterranean Apocalypse: Prophecies of Empire in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries,” *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 61/1-2 (2018), 23-5.

chronicles that detail Muḥammad Zamān's politics in practice reflect another dominant belief: that of inherited seniority and claim to rule based on pedigree and lineage. I would argue that this common belief system (above and beyond end-of-the-world expectations) was in fact what allowed for the possibility of understanding and actual negotiations during moments of encounters. But even here, as we know from earlier instances in the Timurid domain, mere seniority was not enough for political gain.<sup>6</sup> The supposedly all-important Timurid lineage was not a cause of long-term success in the political sphere of the sixteenth century. The varied and chequered career of Muḥammad Zamān demonstrates this most clearly.

Muḥammad Zamān Mīrzā was born in the month of May 1497 in the city of Balkh. At the time of his birth, the city had been under siege for some time by the forces of his grandfather Sultan Ḥusayn Bāyqarā, who was bent on quelling the rebellion of his son Badī' al-Zamān Mīrzā. The story goes that the siege had reduced the inhabitants to starvation, and so the hapless commander of the fort, Amīr Niẓām al-Dīn Shaykh 'Alī Taghāy, had wrapped the newborn infant in some swaddling cloth and dispatched him to his grandfather in order to move him to pity. The ploy worked and the Timurid ruler issued amnesty to the family of his son, who was residing in Balkh, so that they could move to the city of Qunduz about 200 kilometres to the east.<sup>7</sup> The prince's mother is not named by the historian Khvāndamīr, who merely identifies her as the daughter of Tahamtan Beg.<sup>8</sup> The latter is not mentioned again in Khvāndamīr, but Bābur identifies him as one of the Turkmen *begs* who had found patronage at the court of Ḥusayn Bāyqarā, meaning one who belonged to the Bayandur family that functioned as chief lineage of the Aqqoyunlu kingdom.<sup>9</sup>

6 Jürgen Paul, "Khalil Sulṭān and the 'Westerners' (1405-1407)," *Turcica* 42 (2010), 11-45.

7 Ghiyāṣ al-Dīn b. Humām al-Dīn Khvāndamīr, *Tārīkh-i Ḥabīb al-Siyar*, ed. M. Dabīr-Siyāqī (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Khayyām, 2001), Vol. IV, 211. The author states that the events surrounding the birth of the prince fell between 1 May 1497 (29 Sha'bān), after which date the siege began, and forty days later, which would be in the first week of June. The meeting with Sultan Ḥusayn Bāyqarā took place at the end of Shawwal of the same year, which falls on 29 June (209-11). The most recent studies of this region in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries are Maria Subtelny, *Timurids in Transition: Turko-Persian Politics and Acculturation in Medieval Iran* (Leiden: Brill, 2007) and Stephen F. Dale, *The Garden of the Eight Paradises: Bābur and the Culture of Empire in Central Asia, Afghanistan and India (1483-1530)* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), although neither treats Muḥammad Zamān Mirza in any particular detail.

8 Khvāndamīr, *Ḥabīb al-Siyar*, Vol. IV, 211. Bābur also mentions this briefly, which Dale summarises in his *Garden*, 82-4.

9 Bābur, *Bābur-nāma*, ed. Mano, fol. 175b. The Aqqoyunlu ruler Uzun Ḥasan signed his name as Ḥasan Pādīshāh Bāyandur on his official correspondence. See Matthew Melvin-Koushki, "The Delicate Art of Aggression: Uzun Hasan's Fathnama to Qaytbay of 1469," *Iranian Studies* 44/2 (2011), 193-214.

The young prince's exile in Qunduz was not a long one. In 1498/9, Badī' al-Zamān Mīrzā came north from Qandahar accompanied by Amīr Zū'l-Nūn Arghūn, the founder of the later Arghūn dynasty of Qandahar and Sindh, and attacked his father's capital city of Herat during the latter's campaign against another of his sons. When the king returned and found his forces outnumbered and outmanned, he decided to share the reign with his son, allowing him to have his name appear on coins along with that of the king. For his domain, the mīrzā was given the province of Balkh to rule, and henceforth his name was mentioned in the Friday sermons as far east as Badakhshan.<sup>10</sup>

Muḥammad Zamān Mīrzā must have rejoined his father shortly after that. We know that he was already there in 1503 when the founder of the Uzbek state, Muḥammad Shībānī Khān, captured Balkh in the autumn of that year. Khvādamīr states that the young boy's father, Badī' al-Zamān Mīrzā, fled from Balkh upon the approach of the Uzbeks, leaving his son behind under the care of Amir Sulṭān-Qulī Khān.<sup>11</sup> When the Uzbeks arrived, the young prince was placed in the inner fortress for protection while the other amirs successfully warded off the invader.<sup>12</sup>

The events of this siege would have certainly inculcated in the young prince a good sense of his person as the source of royalty and lineage loyalty. According to Khvādamīr, during negotiations the envoys of the Uzbeks had advised the local commanders to switch their allegiances as the "Sun of the fortunes of Timurid sultans had sunk to the horizon of decline, and kingship had once again transferred from that family to the Chinggisid line".<sup>13</sup> This argument evokes the right of Mongol sovereignty that the Timurids themselves had acknowledged, refusing to assume the title of Khan in Central Asia and always ruling on behalf of a puppet Mongol "emperor" of the steppes.<sup>14</sup> In this argument, Shībānī Khān's rise to power would therefore be presented as the explicit assertion of Mongol sovereignty to which the Timurids had nominally yielded.

But the fort-keepers' reply is worth noting too. They had stated,

10 Khvādamīr, *Ḥabīb al-Siyar*, Vol. IV, 247-50.

11 Ibid., Vol. IV, 296.

12 Ibid., Vol. IV, 297-9.

13 Ibid., Vol. IV, 298.

14 See Beatrice F. Manz, *The Rise and Rule of Tamerlane* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); B.F. Manz, "Women in Timurid dynastic politics," in G. Neshat and L. Beck (eds), *Women in Iran From the Rise of Islam to 1800* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2003), 121-39; and, recently, Anna Caiozzo, "Propagande dynastique et célébration dynastique princière, mythes et images à la cour Timouride," *Bulletin d'études orientales* 60 (2011), 177-201.

For over a hundred and fifty years we have, from father to son, lived with comfort and prosperity under the shadow of the bounty and care of the glorious children of Amir Temür. Now that Badī' al-Zamān Mīrzā has experienced a defeat and has not been able to give battle quickly to His Majesty the Khān, how can we trample on the age-old rights of lordship (*huqūq-i tarbiyat*) of those sublime *pādshāhs*?<sup>15</sup>

This was an important point because it showed how loyalty could be gained by less-prestigious lineages (here, the Timurids as opposed to the "Mongol" Shībānīds) through the upholding of justice, prosperity and patronage.

Shortly after this, during the uncertainties and battles that accompanied the collapse of the Timurids and the rise of the Shībānīds, Badī' al-Zamān Mīrzā took his son to Sistan and appointed as his tutor (*atabeg*) Amīr Sulṭān-'Alī Arghūn, brother of Zū'l-Nūn Arghūn.<sup>16</sup> Muḥammad Zamān therefore was protected during the catastrophes of the early sixteenth century that saw the death of his grandfather and complete removal of the Timurid family from Khurasan and Transoxiana. The only inconvenience came when Zāhīr al-Dīn Bābur briefly expelled the Arghūn family from Qandahar, but this posed no direct threat to Muḥammad Zamān. In any event, with the loss of Herat, the two remaining sons of Sultan Ḥusayn Bāyqarā moved west to Damghan in eastern Iran on 19 May 1507. Muḥammad Zamān was recalled from Sistan and joined his father there.<sup>17</sup> Badī' al-Zamān left his son with his brother and travelled west to ask for help from the rising Safavid Shāh Ismā'īl. While he was away, Shībānī Khān attacked Damghan and laid siege to it. Muḥammad Zamān Mīrzā saw his first action there in the defence of the town, which, however, was no match for Shībānīd power. The Timurid princes asked for peace, and at least Muḥammad Zamān was allowed to join his father in Azerbaijan after surrendering Damghan.<sup>18</sup> It was a surprise to at least one contemporary that Shībānī Khān did not execute the young prince on the spot.<sup>19</sup>

It seems that while Badī' al-Zamān Mīrzā continued to start new adventures that took him to Rayy and Astarabad in Iran; Sindh in South Asia; and, finally, Istanbul in the Ottoman empire, where he died of the plague in 1514, his son Muḥammad Zamān Mīrzā remained with Shāh Ismā'īl until the battle of Chaldiran in August of 1514.<sup>20</sup> Perhaps sensing the impending disaster and the

15 Khvādamīr, *Ḥabīb al-Siyar*, Vol. IV, 298.

16 *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, 314.

17 *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, 390.

18 *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, 392.

19 Bābur, *Bābur-nāma*, fol. 167a.

20 Khvādamīr, *Ḥabīb al-Siyar*, Vol. IV, 394-5.

subsequent political vacuum that would be created by the defeat of the Safavids in Khurasan, along with the earlier death of Shībānī Khān, the seventeen-year-old Muḥammad Zamān escaped prior to the battle and headed east for Astarabad, accompanied by about forty retainers.<sup>21</sup> Khurasan was at that time in dire straits, ravaged by the invading armies of the Safavids and the Uzbeks and reduced to famine. Thus, it was a fairly easy target for the young Mīrzā.<sup>22</sup> Here, the prince sent an envoy to the local ruler, Amir Kamāl al-Dīn Ḥusayn, and asked him to offer his services. According to Khvāndamīr, the amir, “in observance of the rights owed to the kings of the Timurid family by his ancestors”, complied with the prince’s demand.<sup>23</sup> As a result, Muḥammad Zamān Mīrzā was able to rule “as if he were an independent *pādshāh*” for three or four months.<sup>24</sup>

His good fortune did not last long. Muḥammad Zamān began eyeing the city of Bistam (about 120 kilometres to the southeast) for conquest. Soon hostilities broke out against loyal Safavid forces in Bistam, which led to the battle of Aq Mashhad on 2 November 1514. The mīrzā’s forces were soundly defeated. Meanwhile, higher-ranking Safavid commanders in Khurasan, who had been slowly proceeding towards Astarabad while waiting for news from Chaldiran, received word from Shah Ismā’īl that he was well and were asked to occupy Astarabad and arrest Muḥammad Zamān Mīrzā.<sup>25</sup> The Timurid Mīrzā received word of this mission and fled into the steppe to the northeast.

After a few months, news arrived that a local notable formerly loyal to Badī’ al-Zamān Mīrzā, Amir Urdū Shāh, had captured Gharchistan in eastern Afghanistan and had, moreover, united many members of the Chaghatay dispensation (*ulus*), meaning members of the elite lineages that ran the Timurid empire.<sup>26</sup> According to Khvāndamīr, the mīrzā accomplished a great feat by quickly travelling the long distance of over 700 kilometres to reach the area controlled by his father’s liegemen.<sup>27</sup> The mīrzā’s arrival turned out to be quite propitious for our narrative, as Khvāndamīr happened to be living in the near vicinity. The detailed information on Muḥammad Zamān’s career in Afghanistan in the *Ḥabīb al-Siyar* was due to this chance encounter. Also significant is the historian’s record of the exchange between himself and the prince, for the

21 Amīr Maḥmūd b. Khvāndamīr, *Īrān dar Rūzgār-i Shāh Ismā’īl va Shāh Tahmāsp*, ed. G. Ṭabāṭabā’ī Majd (Tehran: Bunyād-i Mawqūfāt-i Duktur Maḥmūd Afshār Yazdī, 1991), 145.

22 Qāzī Aḥmad Qumī, *Khulāṣat al-Tawārīkh*, ed. Iḥsān Isḥrāqī (Tehran: Dānishgāh-i Tehran, 2004), Vol. 1, 132.

23 Khvāndamīr, *Ḥabīb al-Siyar*, Vol. IV, 395.

24 *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, 395.

25 *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, 395-6.

26 Amīr Maḥmūd, *Īrān dar Rūzgār*, 145.

27 Khvāndamīr, *Ḥabīb al-Siyar*, Vol. IV, 396.



author tells us that he was at first reluctant to join the mīrzā's retinue but that Muḥammad Zamān demanded that Khvāndamīr should serve him as he had served his Timurid father and grandfather. The historian, who refers to himself on this occasion as an "hereditary service-man" (*banda-i mawrusī*), felt obligated by this request and acquiesced.<sup>28</sup> Here again, as in Astarabad, we see the prince demanding and receiving support based on the rights of ancestral lordship owed to him. This particular bond of fealty initially proves to be the most crucial aspect of his power building while all other factors fail him. As stated above, all this fits very well into the relationships of service or *khidmat*, analysed in detail by Jürgen Paul.<sup>29</sup>

Emboldened by their recent success, Muḥammad Zamān Mīrzā and Amir Urdū Shāh began expanding their possessions and power base. They raided the pastoralist Negūdari people near Safavid Herat and robbed them of many flocks of sheep and horses. They then travelled around the mountains of Ghur to the south and collected treasures and pack animals by threat or entreaty.<sup>30</sup> New opportunities arose as Dīv Sulṭān Rūmlū, the Safavid governor of Balkh, abandoned his post to go and meet Shah Ismā'īl (apparently realising that he would not be able to hold the fort against an Uzbek attack),<sup>31</sup> and delegated his charge to Muḥammad Baharlū, who was a person of obviously lesser ability and importance. This was better than Muḥammad Zamān could have hoped for. He led his forces to Balkh and reached the walls in early November of 1515. While they camped for the winter, many local notables came and joined him, and even the local elite of Balkh began secretly negotiating with the mīrzā. On 5 April 1516 the townspeople opened the gate to Muḥammad Zamān's forces, and the next day the Safavid commander came out of the inner citadel and submitted. Soon the ruler of Sheberghan to the west also arrived and offered his allegiance. In short, Muḥammad Zamān Mīrzā had regained much of his father's original patrimony, which the latter had controlled as co-ruler with Sultan Ḥusayn Bāyqarā less than two decades earlier. Significantly, the mīrzā had done almost no fighting in the process, obviously benefitting from older loyalties and "rights of Lordship" that the inhabitants felt they had owed him.<sup>32</sup>

At this point, the mīrzā decided to defang his main supporter, Amir Urdū Shāh. Muḥammad Zamān had been forced out of Balkh by the amir in order to conduct a number of raids and return to Gharchistan. The mīrzā escaped the amir's grip on the pretence of going to a hunt and did not return. All the envoys

28 Ibid., Vol. iv, 397.

29 See note 4, above.

30 Khvāndamīr, *Ḥabīb al-Siyar*, Vol. iv, 397.

31 Ibid., Vol. iv, 553.

32 Ibid., Vol. iv, 397-8.

sent by the amir remained with the *mīrzā*, and soon the army as well as any remaining Chagatay notables also began defecting.<sup>33</sup> Even before he had a chance to come to the *mīrzā*, the amir was attacked and plundered by the soldiers and barely escaped with his life – first, towards Sheberghan and then towards Balkh, where his brother *Mīrzā Qiyām* was in charge.<sup>34</sup> All his possession was confiscated by his Timurid master.<sup>35</sup> However, once *Muḥammad Zamān* realised that he might lose Balkh, he sent *Khvādamīr* as his envoy to *Urdū Shāh* and asked him to quit the city in order to be forgiven and reinstated in Gharchistan. Unfortunately for the *mīrzā*, *Urdū Shāh* was a capable commander. He managed to hold the city and prevent its people from opening the gates to the Timurid *Mīrzā* out of obligation to “the rights of justice and kindness of the royal family”.<sup>36</sup> Part of *Urdū Shāh*’s strategy was to try to bring into the fray another Timurid prince, *Ẓahīr al-Dīn Muḥammad Bābur* in Kabul. *Muḥammad Zamān* renewed negotiations and came to terms with *Urdū Shāh*. However, during their meetings the latter was murdered, perhaps with *Muḥammad Zamān*’s assent, and the townspeople shut the gates again. A few of the amir’s remaining commanders managed to escape back to Balkh, and under the leadership of *Qiyām Beg* they renewed their dead master’s initial design to go to Kabul and persuade *Bābur* to lead his army to Balkh.<sup>37</sup>

*Bābur* met the envoys and agreed. This new development frightened *Muḥammad Zamān Mīrzā*. In order to assuage his fears *Bābur* sent a messenger, a man named *Shāh Mīr Ḥusayn*, “who was distinguished over the other notables of Transoxiana due to the sublimity of his status and the antiquity of his lineage”.<sup>38</sup> The personal qualifications of the envoy were meant to placate *Muḥammad Zamān*’s sense of royal worth. *Bābur*’s message is also noteworthy. He had written claiming that his invasion of Balkh was intended for the government of that “dear brother” because the besieged commanders of the town had planned on turning it over to the Uzbeks. Now, *Bābur* continued, *Muḥammad Zamān* should trust in the beneficence of *Bābur* and come and meet him in order to be instated as the governor of the whole province.<sup>39</sup>

*Muḥammad Zamān* was initially pleased by this offer. However, *Mahdī Khvāja*, who was married to *Bābur*’s sister, left *Bābur*’s camp and dissuaded *Muḥammad Zamān* from accepting *Bābur*’s offer. The *mīrzā* sent his own

33 Amīr Maḥmūd, *Īrān dar Rūzgār*, 145.

34 Ibid.

35 *Khvādamīr*, *Ḥabīb al-Siyar*, Vol. IV, 399-400.

36 Ibid., Vol. IV, 400.

37 Ibid., Vol. IV, 401.

38 Ibid., Vol. IV, 402.

39 Ibid.

envoy to buy time, offering to come to Bābur only after he had given him Balkh. Meanwhile, he took his men to Sheberghan. The mīrzā's answer angered Bābur, who chased after him.<sup>40</sup> The Chaghatay notables began abandoning Muḥammad Zamān and joining Bābur who was now the more dominant, if not senior, member of the family.<sup>41</sup> After a series of failed attempts by the mīrzā to find a secure location for his men, he finally fled to the mountains of Gharchistan as the local leader, Amīr Shāh Muḥammad Sayf al-Mulūk,<sup>42</sup> was loyal to him and blocked the mountain passes against Bābur, who was therefore forced to return to Kabul. Muḥammad Zamān meanwhile opted to travel south to Qandahar, regroup and recruit, and then head out to recapture Balkh. However, he was thwarted again, this time by the Safavid army of Khurasan led by Ibrāhīm Sulṭān Mawṣillu and Aḥmad Sulṭān Afshār.<sup>43</sup> Muḥammad Zamān Mīrzā was pressured into giving battle by a number of his Mongol Qanji followers, and he and his allies were badly beaten at Chaghcharan.<sup>44</sup>

Stuck between the hostile forces of Bābur in Kabul, the Uzbeks in Transoxiana and the Safavids in Khurasan, the mīrzā and the remainder of his supporters briefly regrouped with stragglers in Gharchistan and decided to make their way to Qandahar without Muḥammad Zamān's army. Khvāndamīr writes that he met up with the mīrzā and dissuaded him from this plan.<sup>45</sup> The chronicler does not explain his reasoning for this. However, being better situated in Central Afghanistan, Khvāndamīr probably knew that the Arghūns had already submitted to Bābur once before and may not have proved reliable if placed under pressure by Kabul. In any event, after a couple of brief misadventures in northern Afghanistan the mīrzā and a hundred retainers were tracked down and captured by Amīr Ibrāhīm Jābūq, Bābur's governor of Balkh, and Amīn Beg of Sheberghan. They sent their royal prisoner to Kabul.<sup>46</sup> The whole time, the mīrzā was treated with a respect befitting his rank. Amīr Ibrāhīm, for example, had a tent set up in the field, then went up to the mīrzā, knelt before him and waited until the mīrzā summoned him into the tent for an interview.<sup>47</sup> In short, the proper Timurid protocol was observed for Muḥammad Zamān even in captivity.

40 Ibid., Vol. IV, 403.

41 Amīr Maḥmūd, *Īrān dar Rūzgār*, 147.

42 Ibid.

43 Khvāndamīr, *Ḥabīb al-Siyar*, Vol. IV, 403.

44 Amīr Maḥmūd, *Īrān dar Rūzgār*, 150-1.

45 Khvāndamīr, *Ḥabīb al-Siyar*, Vol. IV, 403.

46 Ibid., Vol. IV, 404; Amīr Maḥmūd, *Īrān dar Rūzgār*, 152-3.

47 Amīr Maḥmūd, *Īrān dar Rūzgār*, 151.

According to Khvāndamīr, Bābur also did not punish his cousin for his earlier refusal of submission. Rather, “the glorious *pādishāh*” renewed his original treaty with the *mīrzā*, and after showing him favour for three or four months in Kabul married one of his daughters to him whom Dale identifies as Ma’sūma Begum.<sup>48</sup> Bābur also appointed him governor of Balkh again, where, according to Khvāndamīr, the Timurid prince ruled on behalf of his cousin until the time of the composition of the book, in September of 1523.<sup>49</sup> The marriage to Bābur’s daughter was crucial, because in the Timurid tradition one function of inter-marriages across agnatic lineages of the same family was to mend a breach caused by infighting.<sup>50</sup> In 1519 he was certainly showing deference to his father-in-law Bābur by sending letters along with “alms, tribute, and a horse” (*taṣadduq, pīshkash, at*).<sup>51</sup> However, Khvāndamīr makes it clear that Muḥammad Zamān Mīrzā did not consider himself a mere governor. Rather, he clearly saw himself as a monarch of sorts, holding regular diplomatic exchanges with the Safavid governors of Khurasan.<sup>52</sup>

But at the same time, Muḥammad Zamān also developed a reputation for drunkenness and negligence in the affairs of his army and subjects. Soon, the Uzbek rulers of Transoxiana cautiously began to test his strength. For example, Qarā Khān, son of Walad Khān Beg Sulṭān, would lead his men to the countryside of Balkh during harvest season and confiscate the grain there without meeting any resistance from Muḥammad Zamān’s men.<sup>53</sup> Bābur, who at this time had gone to India, came to his cousin’s aid. He initially sent the *mīrzā* a share of the Lodi treasures won after the battle of Panipat worth fifteen thousand *lac*, or one and a half million *tankas*. This sum was second only in size to the money given to Bābur’s own son Kāmīrān, who received seventeen thousand *lac*, and certainly more than that bestowed on the emperor’s younger sons ‘Askārī and Hindal who, along with the female members of the family, received many precious jewels and costly fabrics.<sup>54</sup> Perhaps sensing the impending danger of the Uzbeks, Muḥammad Zamān left for India.<sup>55</sup>

48 Dale, *Garden*, 319; Ram Shanker Avasthy, *The Mughal Emperor Humāyūn* (Allahabad: University of Allahabad, 1965), 68. Khvāndamīr, *Ḥabīb al-Siyar*, Vol. IV, 401-3 only identifies her person as “a girl from the women of the imperial house” (*karīma-i az mukhaddarāt-i sarāparda-i pādshāhī*).

49 Khvāndamīr, *Ḥabīb al-Siyar*, Vol. IV, 404.

50 Manz, “Women in Timurid Dynastic Politics,” 121-39.

51 Bābur, *Bābur-nāma*, fols 227a, 238a.

52 Khvāndamīr, *Ḥabīb al-Siyar*, Vol. IV, 404; Amīr Maḥmūd, *Īrān dar Rūzgār*, 154.

53 Amīr Maḥmūd, *Īrān dar Rūzgār*, 154-5.

54 Bābur, *Bābur-nāma*, fol. 293b.

55 Aḥmad Tattavī and Ja’far Beg Qazvīnī, *Tārīkh-i Alfī*, ed. G.R. Ṭabāṭabā-ī Majd, 8 vols (Tehran: Shirkat-i Intishārāt-i ‘Ilmī va Farhangī, 2003), 5640.

He probably arrived in late 1527, shortly after other men and women of the Timurid family turned up in India from Kabul. Bābur's son 'Askarī came to Agra on 18 September, while the historian Khvāndamīr and others arrived two days later on the 20th.<sup>56</sup> The sense of recent arrival is supported by the fact that Muḥammad Zamān asked to remain in Agra and not go on to Gwalior with the emperor.<sup>57</sup>

The mīrẓā continued to enjoy great prestige in India thanks to his lineage. At court, he sat immediately to the left of the emperor,<sup>58</sup> rode on rafts immediately behind the emperor during parties and took drugs with him.<sup>59</sup> In February 1529, when Bābur rode to defeat the last attempt at Afghan resistance in Bihar under the leadership of Sultan Maḥmūd Lodi, Muḥammad Zamān reluctantly went ahead of the emperor, along with Shaykh Zayn Khvāfi, who was later to translate Bābur's memoirs, and Yūnus 'Alī.<sup>60</sup> For his service, he was awarded a robe; a dagger; a horse; and even a parasol, the *chatr*, which was a symbol of royalty. He was then given a large portion of Bihar as his land grant, after having to kneel before the emperor.<sup>61</sup> The importance of this scene cannot be minimised even though it occupies a small portion in the historical record. Muḥammad Zamān Mīrẓā was essentially receiving the right to rule as a small king in Bihar.<sup>62</sup> While Bābur set aside twelve and a half million *tankas* from the revenue of Bihar as royal income (*khālīṣa*), Muḥammad Zamān would be in charge of the remainder which amounted to twenty-eight million *tankas* per annum.<sup>63</sup> Soon afterwards, Bābur granted much of Bihar to the newly submitted Afghans and compensated Muḥammad Zamān by giving him the entire kingdom of Jaunpur, which had a total revenue of over forty million *tankas*.<sup>64</sup> However, Muḥammad Zamān did not have much time to enjoy the pecuniary rewards of Jaunpur. He was transferred again by the summer of the same year, to Chunar and a few other districts and was now expected to fight new Afghan rebels Biban and Bāyazīd.<sup>65</sup> Bābur does not provide revenue statistics for the

56 Bābur, *Bābur-nāma*, fol. 339.

57 Ibid.

58 Ibid., fol. 352.

59 Ibid., fol. 365b.

60 Ibid., fols 366b-367a.

61 Ibid., fol. 367b.

62 Amīr Maḥmūd, *Īrān dar Rūzgār*, 155 says this grant earned him an annual income of twenty thousand Tabrizi *tūmāns*, which be the equivalent of ten *lac*, or one million rupees. The exchange rate is based on figures given by Ja'far Beg Qazvīnī in the *Tārīkh-i Alfī*, Vol. VIII, 5468, 5496 and 4404 for the late fifteenth to early sixteenth century.

63 Bābur, *Bābur-nāma*, fol. 367b. The total figures for Bihar are given on fol. 293a.

64 Ibid., fol. 375b.

65 Ibid., fol. 378a.

fort of Chunar, but its income would have been completely dwarfed by the massive wealth of Bihar and Jaunpur. Perhaps there is little wonder that we find him back in Jaunpur at the time of Bābur's death in December 1530.

It is plausible that Muḥammad Zamān saw himself as the best candidate for the throne after Bābur's death. After all, he was the highest-ranking surviving Timurid, and was practically a son to the emperor thanks to marrying his daughter. Later chroniclers such as Mīrzā Ḥaydar Dughlāt and Abū'l-Faẓl accuse him of engaging in opposition (*khilāf*) and rebellious behaviour (*baghā*).<sup>66</sup> But what did this actually entail? According to Khūrshāh b. Qubād al-Ḥusaynī, Muḥammad Zamān Mīrzā began gathering a large force around himself.<sup>67</sup> His men included other prominent Timurid princes such as Muḥammad Sultan Mīrzā, who was a grandson of Sultan Ḥusayn Bāyqarā from his mother's side, as well his son Ulugh Mīrzā.<sup>68</sup> This was clearly a major problem as the Bāyqarāid princes probably enjoyed at least as much prestige as the descendants of Abū Sa'īd Mīrzā (Bābur and Humāyūn). Moreover, the new emperor Humāyūn was a generation below Muḥammad Zamān Mīrzā in the line of royal descent based on the logic of agnatic kinship followed by the Timurids, and perhaps was seen as less deserving to rule than his more senior cousin.

The other issue was that, according to the Mughal historian, Humāyūn's half-sister, Gulbadan, Muḥammad Zamān also murdered Bābā Qashqa Kūkī at this time.<sup>69</sup> No motive is provided here, but we know from Bābur's memoirs that "Bābā Qashqa Moghul" had been in the emperor's service since his days in Kabul. He received a robe of honour from him once for showing bravery during a raid against Afghans in the Karmash and Bangash mountains in 1519.<sup>70</sup> In 1525, at the battle of Panipat against Ibrāhīm Lodi, "Bābā Qashqa and his Moghuls" fought in the flank assault (*tolghama*).<sup>71</sup> He was not present at the battle of Khanua in 1527, but his brother Malik Qāsim and their Mughals were positioned in the right wing and repulsed an assault from Rana Sangha's left wing.<sup>72</sup> Bābur attached the brothers and their men to Muḥammad Sultan Mīrzā in

66 Mirza Ḥaydar Dughlat, *Tārikh-i Rāshidī*, 601; and Abū'l-Faẓl, *Akbarnāma*, ed. G.R. Ṭabāṭabā'ī Majd, (Tehran: Anjuman-i Āthār va Mafākhir-i Farhangī, 2006), Vol. 1, 194. The "rebellion" occurred on two occasions. The first did not amount to much. See Avasthy, *Mughal Emperor Humāyūn*, 69-70.

67 Khūrshāh b. Qubād al-Ḥusaynī, *Tārikh-i Qutbī*, ed. M.H. Zaidi (New Delhi: Jamia Millia Islamia, 1965), 600.

68 Abū'l-Faẓl, *Akbarnāma*, Vol. 1, 194; Ḥaydar Dughlat, *Tārikh-i Rashidī*, 680.

69 Gulbadan Begam, "Humāyūn-nāma." In W.M. Thackston (ed. and trans.), *Three Memoirs of Humāyūn* (Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda Publishers, 2009), 22b-23a.

70 Bābur, *Bābur-nāma*, fols 239a-240a.

71 Ibid., fol. 266a.

72 Ibid., fols 312a-b.

Qannauj.<sup>73</sup> Both brothers served in the battle against the Afghans in the east where Malik Qāsīm was killed in early 1528.<sup>74</sup> In short, the inexplicable murder of an old royal commander of Bābur's by Muḥammad Zamān must have appeared to Humāyūn as crossing a red line. The response was swift. Alarmed, the young emperor immediately led an army to Qannauj and met his adversary on the banks of the river Ganges. At this point a number of the senior commanders who had served under Bābur began travelling to the mīrzā's camp and negotiated a truce. After reassuring the mīrzā, Mahdī Khvāja finally managed to bring him to the imperial camp where the former rebel was welcome by lavish festivities.<sup>75</sup>

The choice of Mahdī Khvāja as envoy was crucial. He too, like Muḥammad Zamān, was connected to Bābur by marriage, and he too may have begun the reign of Humāyūn with an act of defiance as Bābur's chief counsellor (*vakīl*), Khalīfa Beg, apparently had tinkered with the idea of enthroning him instead of Humāyūn as the next emperor.<sup>76</sup> If anyone could prove the emperor's clemency it was Mahdī Khvāja. However, Muḥammad Zamān had made a big mistake in conceding and crossing over to Humāyūn's camp. The emperor reneged on his promise of clemency once he had his rival in his grip. After getting him very drunk at the party, Humāyūn had him arrested and conducted to Bayana. The mīrzā's warden is identified as Yādgar Beg Ṭaghay by most, and as 'Alī Ṭaghay by one historian.<sup>77</sup> Yādgar Beg is identified as Bābur's father-in-law,<sup>78</sup> while 'Alī Ṭaghay perhaps identifies him as the same man who many years ago had delivered the new-born mīrzā to his grandfather Ḥusayn Bāyqarā in order to end the siege of Balkh (see above). Humāyūn had also ordered the mīrzā to be blinded by abacination, an act that would disqualify him from rule.<sup>79</sup> This would have certainly been the end of Muḥammad Zamān's career, but the

73 Ibid., fol. 329a.

74 Ibid., fols 336b-338a.

75 Khūrshāh, *Tārīkh-i Quṭbī*, 600-1.

76 Nizām al-Dīn Aḥmad, *Ṭabaqāt-i Akbarī*, ed. B. De (Calcutta: Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1931), Vol. 11, 42. Nizām al-Dīn asserts this on the authority of his father, who claimed to have been present during the deliberations. Annette Beveridge did not find the story fully convincing, as many better candidates also existed. See her comments in her edition and translation of Gulbadan, *History of Humayun*, (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1902), 298-301. Dale follows her, but Avasthy provides a very thorough consideration of the anecdote and accepts Nizām al-Dīn's account. See Avasthy, *Mughal Emperor Humayun*, 48-55.

77 Firishta, *Tārīkh-e Fereshte*, Vol. 11, 63; Tattavī and Qazvīnī, *Tārīkh-i Alfī*, Vol. VIII, 5640; Nizam al-Din, *Ṭabaqāt*, Vol. 11, 30 (these chronicles being interrelated); and Abu'l-Faẓl, *Akbarnāma*, Vol. 1, 200; Khūrshāh, *Tārīkh-i Quṭbī*, 600-2 calls him 'Alī Ṭaghay. Ṭaghay refers to a "maternal uncle". See Dale, *Garden*, 496.

78 Abu al-Faẓl, *Akbarnāma*, Vol. 1, 178.

79 Khūrshāh, *Tārīkh-i Quṭbī*, 600-2.

mīrzā could not be contained so easily. The Ṭaghāy's men intentionally botched the abacination procedure in order to protect Muḥammad Zamān's irises.<sup>80</sup> He then obtained a forged imperial decree and used it to escape with help from the same individuals.<sup>81</sup> On their way out, he and a number of associates murdered their guards, including the Ṭaghay and others, and escaped into the middle of the country – and from there made their way to Gujarat.<sup>82</sup>

These events suggest that the mīrzā enjoyed support from people inside the Mughal chancery and army who could forge the imperial seal or use it without authorisation. Others from the Mughal army would have had to provide arms and support in order to get the prisoner out of the fort.

Muḥammad Zamān's flight to Gujarat made very good sense. The rival but still friendly sultanate of Gujarat was then ruled by Sultan Bahādur of the Muẓaffarid dynasty. This ambitious sultan was expanding his kingdom into the Gujarati hinterland, was handling the Portuguese along his coastline and was drawing a decent number of Lodi refugees to his court. He had been prodded by recent Afghan arrivals to invade Hindustan as they believed that the Mughal army had lost its impeccability (*ṣarāfat*) and had been weakened by luxury and comfort.<sup>83</sup> Mindful of a potential confrontation with the Mughals, Sultan Bahādur welcomed Muḥammad Zamān Mīrzā with open arms, expecting his presence in the Gujarat army during a possible battle against Humāyūn to cause many Mughals warriors to defect to the Gujarati side.<sup>84</sup> Thus, the pretext for war was created. A number of envoys travelled back and forth between the two courts in order to negotiate the fate of the refugees, whom Sultan Bahādur refused to give up. The tone of the exchanges grew progressively more confrontational. Though they were not able to resolve their differences, the diplomatic correspondence reveals important details about the handling of the Timurid legacy by the two sides. For example, the Mughal letters took recourse to history and ominously reminded the Gujaratis of the exchange between Temūr and the Ottoman sultan Bayezid I around 1400, saying that while Temūr had no desire to bring ruin to Anatolia the Ottomans' refusal to turn in two political refugees, Qara Yūsuf and Aḥmad Jalāyir, had led to the destruction of Ottoman domains.<sup>85</sup>

80 Nizām al-Dīn, *Ṭabaqāt*, Vol. II, 30.

81 Abū'l-Faẓl, *Akbarnāma*, Vol. I, 195, 200.

82 Khūrshāh, *Tārīkh-i Quṭbī*, 604.

83 Shāh Abū Turāb Walī, *Tārīkh-i Gujarāt*, ed. E. Dennison Ross (Calcutta: Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1909), 5.

84 Ibid.

85 Khūrshāh, *Tārīkh-i Quṭbī*, 606-9.



The significance of this self-consciously historical and Timurid reference was not lost to the Gujarat court. The court of Sultan Bahādur chastised Humāyūn for violating his promise of safety to Muḥammad Zamān Mīrẓā, whom he significantly calls “the sum total of great sultans and glorious khaqans”, at Qannauj earlier when he had arrested him and sent him to Bayana in chains. It was only natural that the mīrẓā should take refuge in Gujarat since the fairness and morality of Bahādur’s court was well known. Sultan Bahādur had in fact sworn an oath on the Qur’an to protect Muḥammad Zamān Mīrẓā, and could not possibly renege on his promise. As for Humāyūn’s coming to Gwalior, the Gujarati sultan reminded his counterpart that he had gone off to the port of Diu in order to defeat the Portuguese who had violated their treaty with the sultan. With regards to Humāyūn’s reference to the Timurids and the Ottomans, Sultan Bahādur answered mockingly that the emperor should not brag about his ancestor from seven generations ago since he himself had not accomplished anything worthy of mention.<sup>86</sup>

This diplomatic impasse eventually led to war, and the Mughal army marched toward Gujarat in November of 1534. The two sides ran into each other near Mandsaur in Malwa, about halfway between Agra and Ahmedabad, the respective capitals of each realm. Following the advice of their artillery commander, Rūmī Khān, the Gujaratis tied their carts together in a circle, placed cannons behind the carts and dug a trench around their makeshift fortified camp.<sup>87</sup> The main fighting thenceforth involved forays between Mughal and Gujarati soldiers, as well as attempts by the Mughal army to prevent supplies from reaching the Gujarati camp.<sup>88</sup>

Muḥammad Zamān Mīrẓā led the most successful foray for the Gujarati side. He led a group of 500 cavalymen in a charge towards the Mughal lines, and then subsequently lured part of the Mughal army into a chase after repeatedly firing arrows and withdrawing. The pursuant Mughal detachment unwisely followed Muḥammad Zamān too far, back within range of Rumi Khān’s cannons. The resulting volley led to many casualties.<sup>89</sup> While this attempt was daring and successful, it did not produce the results desired by Sultan Bahādur or perhaps Muḥammad Zamān himself, as the appearance of the Timurid prince on the field did not cause a massive defection by Mughal soldiers. Nor did Muḥammad Zamān’s success change the course of the war. The main Mughal offensive began on 21 April and lasted until the 24th. At that

86 Ibid., 609-12; Abū Turāb, *Tārīkh-i Gujarāt*, 9-11.

87 On this technique, see Gábor Ágoston, “Firearms and Military Adaptation: The Ottomans and the European Military Revolution,” *Journal of World History* 25/1 (2014), 91-2.

88 Abū'l-Faẓl, *Akbarnāma*, Vol. 1, 206.

89 Ibid.

point, the Gujarati camp disbanded. Sultan Bahādur and his chief commanders abandoned their soldiers and escaped to Mandu. Muḥammad Zamān also fled, but he went north at the instigation of Sultan Bahādur who hoped that the Timurid prince could create enough of a distraction to draw the Mughals out of Gujarat.<sup>90</sup> This event was followed by a series of sieges, battles and escapes that led to the conquest and subsequent loss of Gujarat by the Mughal army (mainly due to internal dissension), and ultimately the murder of Sultan Bahādur by the Portuguese during a meeting at sea in 1537.

The death of Bahādur and the withdrawal of Humāyūn from Gujarat created a political vacuum there. That served as a pull factor for Muḥammad Zamān to try his luck again at building a new kingdom. There was also a push factor. After his initial escape from Gujarat, Muḥammad Zamān had at first come to Sindh seeking support from the Arghūn king Shāh Ḥusayn Arghūn, grandson of Zu'l-Nūn Arghūn.<sup>91</sup> However, Shāh Ḥusayn Arghūn did not support Muḥammad Zamān as the latter undoubtedly expected based on his family relations to the Arghūns. Instead, he sent him to take Lahore during Kāmran's absence. As Abū'l-Faḏl states, the emperor's brother had left the town in order to go to Qandahar and fight Sām Mīrzā Ṣafavī, who had seized the fort from Kamran's man, Khvāja Kalān Beg.<sup>92</sup> The mīrzā initially succeeded at taking over his brother-in-law's seat, but upon Kamran's return he was forced to leave again. Now Gujarat could provide him new opportunities, even if it meant ascending its throne with Portuguese help.

According to the chroniclers Abū'l-Faḏl and Abū Turāb, Muḥammad Zamān appeared in Gujarat wearing dark clothes in mourning for the late sultan. He paid homage to Sultan Bahādur's mother and presented himself as her second son. Soon he took hold of a portion of Sultan Bahādur's treasures, apparently convincing the queen that he could avenge her son's death. Using his new-found treasures, Muḥammad Zamān then rallied some people around him against the Portuguese in Diu, and simultaneously leveraged his new-found power and treasures to negotiate a treaty in Diu that would meet certain Portuguese demands in exchange for his right to be styled king of Gujarat.<sup>93</sup>

90 Nizām al-Dīn, *Ṭabaqāt*, Vol. 11, 40; Abū'l-Faḏl, *Akbarnāma*, Vol. 1, 207.

91 Abū'l-Faḏl, *Akbarnāma*, Vol. 1, 210. On the Arghūns and their relationship with Badī' al-Zamān Mirza, see Khvāndamīr (cited above) as well as Sayyid Mīr Muḥammad b. Bāyazīd Pūranī, *Nuṣratnāma-i Tarkhān*, ed. Ansar Zahid Khan (Karachi: Institute of Central and West Asian Studies of the University of Karachi, 2000); and Muḥammad Ma'ṣūm Bakkārī, *Tārīkh-i Sind al-ma'rūf bih Tārīkh-i Ma'ṣūmī*, ed. Umar Muhammad Daudpoṭa (Pune: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1938).

92 Abū'l-Faḏl, *Akbarnāma*, Vol. 1, 210.

93 Abū'l-Faḏl, *Akbarnāma*, Vol. 1, 210.

Not all of Muḥammad Zamān's men were Gujaratis. Other Timurid/Mughal notables were also in his camp. For instance, we know by an offhand remark from Abū Turāb that Muḥammad Zamān's top commander and deputy at this time was Mīr Ḥusām al-Dīn Mirak, son of Mīr Khalīfa.<sup>94</sup> "Khalīfa", or deputy, refers to Nizām al-Dīn 'Alī Barlas who was Bābur's deputy and chief councillor throughout his life, from Transoxiana to Kabul to India.<sup>95</sup> So, to have Bābur's Khalīfa's son Ḥusām al-Dīn serving the mīrzā in the same capacity that his father had served the emperor shows that Muḥammad Zamān enjoyed a good deal of continued loyalty from some of Bābur's Central Asian men – and all at Humāyūn's expense.

The prince's fortunes rose very rapidly. Sultan Bahādūr had been killed in February of 1537, and the treaty with the Portuguese was signed on 27 March 1537 at the residence of the Portuguese governor Nuno da Cunha (d. 1539). In this treaty, negotiated by Muḥammad Zamān Mīrzā's ambassador, a person identified as Khvāja Ḥāfīz, Muḥammad Zamān would be recognised as the king of Gujarat, would issue coins in his name and be identified as such in Friday sermons. He also asked the Portuguese to allow horse merchants to continue bringing horses to Diu and sell them there just as before. In exchange, the Portuguese, who already controlled the port of Diu, now received the port of Mangrol along with the coastline apparently all the way up to the tip of the peninsula at Okha, and all the way down to Diu and Bassein.<sup>96</sup> The treaty did not eliminate the fees placed by the Portuguese on merchants from the time of Sultan Bahādūr, and if anything expanded their reach and control over Gujarati commerce.

It is important to note certain features of the treaty. First of all, the text begins with a straightforward prayer: "In the name of the one and only god, Creator of everything, amen" (*Em nome de hum só Deos todo poderoso, criador de todas as cousas, amen*).<sup>97</sup> There is no reference to the end of times here or the impending apocalypse. Rather, the Portuguese and their Timurid counterpart obviously share in a common belief of monotheism. Second, Muḥammad Zamān's claim to rule is also worth noting. The signatories of the treaty are identified as the Portuguese and the "Khurasanis", and Muḥammad Zamān argues that he should be styled king because "he was the son of the Sultan Badī' al-Zamān, king of the Khurasanis and of a very ancient blood of kings" (*ele era*

94 Abū Turāb, *Tārīkh-i Gujarāt*, 38.

95 There are numerous mentions of him in the *Bābur-nāma*.

96 The text refers to the endpoint as an island called "*ilha do bate chaluão*", which may be Bet Shankhodar.

97 The text of the treaty is published in Rodrigo José de Lima Felner, *Subsidios para a historia da India portuguesa* (Lisbon: Typ. da Academia real das sciencias, 1868), 224.

*filho do soltão bade muza zamom Rey dos corações e de tão antigo sangue de Reis*).<sup>98</sup> Here, the notion of legitimacy espoused by both sides is strictly based on a rather conventional concept of patrilineal descent. Muḥammad Zamān rather exaggerates his father's importance by calling him sultan and the king of the Khurāsānīs. On the other hand the Portuguese text uses the word "blood" to signify lineage, which Persian texts of this period did not. But other than these inaccuracies, the two sides understood each other on the same communicative plane.

The mīrzā's brief stint as king of Gujarat ended in disaster. Abū Turāb believed that had Muḥammad Zamān used his newly acquired army of 12,000, gathered thanks to the treasures of Sultan Bahādūr, and gone to Ahmedabad instead of Diu he would have met with success. He blamed Muḥammad Zamān's misguided and pointless treaty with the Portuguese on the prince's clouded judgement caused by opium addiction.<sup>99</sup> Within days, Gujarati commander 'Imād al-Mulk, a slave soldier of Sultan Bahādūr, rose up against him.<sup>100</sup> 'Imād al-Mulk reportedly reproached the Gujarati nobles for allowing a "pathetic Moghul" (*mughul-i maflūk*), a servitor (*nawkar*) of their king, to sit on his throne.<sup>101</sup> If this is true, then we have an interesting assessment of Muḥammad Zamān's position in Gujarat. While he saw himself as king thanks to royal ancestry, his subservient status vis-à-vis South Asian emperors (*pādshāh*) (Humāyūn or Bahādūr) would undermine his claims to rule, and would place him on the same level as the slave commander who had been outraged by the disloyal mīrzā (*namak ḥarām*).<sup>102</sup>

According to Abū Turāb, Muḥammad Zamān did not meet 'Imād al-Mulk in a pitched battle but arranged his army in the same manner as Bahādūr Shāh had earlier. His forces holed up behind a fortification of carts and dug a trench on the outer perimeter.<sup>103</sup> The use of this tactic reveals something that is excluded from the narrative of Indo-Persian narratives. The use of the *wagenburg* presupposed the prince's access to light artillery that would be mounted on the carts or placed behind or in between them, which Muḥammad Zamān must certainly have purchased from the Portuguese. This fact, more than the mīrzā's opium addiction (which also afflicted Bābur and Humāyūn), is most likely the reason for his decision to avoid leaving Diu for Ahmedabad. He and his

98 Ibid., 225.

99 Abū Turāb, *Tārīkh-i Gujārāt*, 36.

100 Abū'l-Faẓl, *Akbarnāma*, Vol. 1, 225.

101 Abū Turāb, *Tārīkh-i Gujārāt*, 37.

102 Ibid. 'Imād al-Mulk uses the title for himself if he should fail in showing loyalty to the "emperors of Gujarat", obviously implicating Muḥammad Zamān by the same logic.

103 Ibid., 39.

commanders must have reasoned that their small army of 12,000 armed with field artillery but not siege pieces would have a hard time taking Ahmedabad quickly, while a long drawn-out siege in hostile territory would have exposed them to numerous threats.

Be that as it may, these tactics did not avail the “Khurasanis”. The *mīrzā* and his top commander fled to Sindh after three days.<sup>104</sup> Finding little support in Sindh, the defeated prince had no recourse now but to return to his brother-in-law, emperor Humāyūn. The latter, who was in the midst of contending with the uprising of Sher Khān Sur in the east, accepted his cousin back into the Mughal ranks.<sup>105</sup> We know that he was in the inner circles<sup>106</sup> of the emperor, because on one occasion the news of the arrival of Sher Khān’s army was relayed to the emperor by Muḥammad Zamān who had been informed of the matter by a sentinel. During the decisive battle of Chausa, it was believed that the Afghans’ victorious morning raid on the Mughal camp was in part the fault of Muḥammad Zamān, who had neglected his night watch.<sup>107</sup> He died in the river Ganges during the flight of the Mughal army, either drowning or being shot by pursuant Afghan soldiers who rode on boats into the river and fired at or harpooned the Mughal soldiers swimming away in panic.<sup>108</sup>

Muḥammad Zamān Mīrzā had a chequered career. First, in his early years he lived a life of adventure and state building. In that he resembled his more successful cousin and father-in-law Bābur. However, in contrast to Bābur or others, Muḥammad Zamān’s efforts cannot be, and were not specifically, designated as a phase of political vagabondage or *qazaqluq*. He was not merely a charismatic leader in charge of a band of raiders but a prince demanding forts as his birthright.<sup>109</sup> Moreover, his field of activity was scattered over a large area from Astarabad to Balkh, a distance of over 1,500 kilometres. Also, much of his success was based on his status within the Timurid lineage group. In some ways, it might be said that he was used as a pawn or commodity by various more able commanders – be they Urdū Shāh, Bābur, Sultan Bahādur or Nuno da Cunha – all of whom tried to exploit the *mīrzā* for his pedigree.

104 Ibid.

105 Nizām al-Dīn, *Tabaqāt*, Vol. II, 42.

106 Abū'l-Faẓl, *Akbarnāma*, Vol. I, 240.

107 Ibid., Vol. I, 242.

108 ‘Abd al-Qādir Badā’ūnī, *Muntakhab al-tavārīkh*, ed. Tawfiq Subhānī (Tehran: Anjuman-i Āthār va Mafākhir-i Farhangī, 2000-2001), vol. I: 242.

109 Joo-Yup Lee, *Qazaqliq, or Ambitious Brigandage, and the Formation of the Qazaqs: State and Identity in Post-Mongol Central Eurasia* (Leiden: Brill, 2015).

This Timurid 'legitimacy', while quite useful in Afghanistan, did little to help him in India where he needed to make strong alliances with local power holders. This was the case both in Jaunpur and in Gujarat where he simply failed to join Afghan rebels (Sher Khān, Bāyazīd or Biban) or Gujarati notables ('Imād al-Mulk and others). To put it the other way round, the Afghans and the Gujaratis had little use for a mediocre commander who could not convert the prestige of his lineage into successful recruitment. We can thus say that those that did appeal to Timurid legitimacy (such as Bābur, Humāyūn or Akbar) often did so retroactively along with a number of other strategies of legitimation. The man with the strongest Timurid claim in his lifetime could not gain power through it.

Perhaps most importantly, in contrast to the more successful polities created by the survivors of the Timurid order such as the Arghūns in Qandahar and the Bāburids in Kabul, Muḥammad Zamān's hold over Balkh did not benefit from the strategic commercial potential that Kabul and Qandahar possessed. Even when he succeeded at being recognised king in Gujarat for a short stint, he ceded all the commercial benefits of his kingdom to the Portuguese. In other words, Muḥammad Zamān's career shows that the success of new states founded by Turko-Mongol elite families in sixteenth-century India owed very little to dynastic pedigree and legitimacy.

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## Remembering Turkish Origins in the Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-century Deccan: The Qaraqoyunlu Past in the Persian Chronicles of the Qutbshahi Dynasty

*A.C.S. Peacock*

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Deccan presented a patchwork of Muslim states dominated by competing groups of immigrants and locals.<sup>1</sup> The best known of these dynasties were the Nizamshahis of Ahmadnagar, the Adilshahis of Bijapur and the Qutbshahis of Golconda – all of which arose out of the rubble of the Bahmani sultanate which collapsed in 1528, having been founded by a Turkish military slave who had broken away from the service of the Delhi sultans in 1347.<sup>2</sup> While the Bahmanis seem to have sought to play down their origins, instead linking themselves to the ancient Iranian hero Bahman of *Shāhnāma* fame, several of their successor states proudly vaunted their Turkish roots. These served to link Deccani rulers to the prestigious dynasties of the Middle East. In the case of the Adilshahis, for instance, their historians variously claimed for them descent from the Ottomans or, perhaps more surprisingly, from the by-then-defunct Turkmen Aqqoyunlu dynasty that had dominated eastern Anatolia and Iran in the later fifteenth century. As Roy Fischel has argued, the association with these Turkish Middle Eastern dynasties was not merely a legitimatory strategy to augment the prestige of Deccani sultans by giving them a royal origin. It may also have represented an attempt by Deccani dynasties to anchor themselves in a wider Turko-Muslim world at a time when their independence was being increasingly threatened by the Mughals' southwards advance, and to gain the support of the immigrant elites from the Middle East who constituted a crucial force in

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2 On the Bahmanis, see N.A. Ansari, "Bahmanid Dynasty," *Encyclopaedia Iranica* (London and Costa Mesa, CA: Encyclopaedia Iranica Foundation, 1982-); see also the chapter by Maya Petrovich in this volume.

Deccani politics.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, Turkish dynastic origins were a common theme of historiography across the eastern Islamic world in the period, from the Ottoman empire to Central Asia to India. As Ali Anooshahr has put it,

Persianate historians living in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and writing about the Turco-Mongol or Turkestani ancestry of their kings were usually the inventors of such genealogical projects ... The invention of pedigrees from a mythologised past for new leaders was necessitated by the very act of inscribing one's patron in the teleology of Islamic monarchies, by the very logic of historiographic expectations.<sup>4</sup>

By locating their patrons in this scheme of Turkish-descended monarchs, writers in the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Deccan could not merely establish these rulers' legitimacy but also integrate their own historical works into the broader literary conventions of Persian historiography of the period.

The Qutbshahis of Golconda also traced their origins to a Turkmen confederation that ruled much of Iran, eastern Anatolia and Azerbaijan in the fifteenth century, the Qaraqoyunlu. This claim is well known to scholars,<sup>5</sup> but its precise nature has not yet been the subject of detailed research. In this chapter I will examine the ways in which the Qutbshahis' claim to Qaraqoyunlu descent was elaborated by different chroniclers of the dynasty, its details changing over time, apparently in response to a fluid political situation. As well as illuminating the legitimacy strategies adopted by the leading dynasty of the Deccan, this study hopes also to shed some light on the Persian historiography of the Qutbshahis, which remains largely unpublished and unstudied beyond preliminary lists of the main authors and their works.<sup>6</sup>

3 Roy Fischel, "Origin Narratives, Legitimacy, and the Practice of Cosmopolitan Language in the Early Modern Deccan, India," *Purushartha* 33 (2015), 71-95.

4 Ali Anooshahr, *Turkestan and the Rise of Eurasian Empires: A Study of Politics and Invented Traditions* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2018), 2.

5 E.g. Vladimir Minorsky, "The Qaraqoyunlu and the Qutb-shāhs (Turkmenica, 10)," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 17 (1955), 50-73; H.K. Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shāhī Dynasty* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1974).

6 Nazir Ahmad, "Language and Literature: Persian," in H.K. Sherwani and P.M. Joshi (eds), *History of the Medieval Deccan*, Vol. II (*Mainly Cultural Aspects*) (Hyderabad, India: Government of Andhra Pradesh, 1974), 77-115, with a list of principal chronicles produced under the Adilshahis, Qutbshahis and Nizamshahis at pp. 102-7; T.N. Devare, *A Short History of Persian Literature at the Bahmani, the Adilshahi and the Qutbshahi Courts-Deccan* (Pune: np., 1961), 262-335 is the most comprehensive survey of Deccani Persian historiography to date. The appendix to Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shāhī Dynasty*, 681-703 gives a useful overview of sources on the Qutbshahis; the section on Persian chronicles reproduces more or less word-for-word his earlier work, H.K. Sherwani, "Contemporary Histories of the Qutb Shāhī Dynasty

The Qaraqoyunlu produced no historian to commemorate their deeds, a fact which has persuaded modern historians of the value of the information contained in the Qutbshahi sources. The distinguished scholar Vladimir Minorsky presented a translation of parts of one Qutbshahi source that treats the Qaraqoyunlu connection, the *Tārīkh-i Sulṭān-Muḥammad* (also sometimes known as the *Tārīkh-i Qutbshāhī*), as a source for Qaraqoyunlu history, stating that

[t]he stormy and eventful period of Turkmen domination, with all its repercussions in Khorasan, the Caucasus, Syria, Egypt, Mesopotamia, and India, is still to be built up from manifold and scattered evidence, and the story told by the anonymous historian of the Qutb-shahs is one of the most complete general accounts of the Qara-qoyunlu dynasty.<sup>7</sup>

Similarly, the most detailed modern reconstruction of Qaraqoyunlu history, by the Turkish scholar Faruk Sümer, has relied on pieces of information in a variety of well-known Iranian chronicles of the fourteenth and fifteenth century, such as Ḥāfīz-i Abrū and Mīrkhvānd, supplemented by some material from Arabic chronicles and references to those Qutbshahi sources to which Sümer could get access.<sup>8</sup> However, as will be seen, the shifting representations of Qa-

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of Golkonda,” in M. Hasan and M. Mujeeb (eds), *Historians of Medieval India* (Meerut: Meenakshi Prakashan, 1968), 84-97. A more extensive survey, with a number of factual errors, is Najma Siddiqua, *Persian Language and Literature in Golconda (During the Qutb Shahi Reign AD 1518-1687)* (New Delhi: Adam, 2011), 115-58. A sophisticated examination of Deccani historiography of the period, focusing on Dakhni texts, is Subah Dayal, “Vernacular Conquest?: A Persian Patron and His Image in the Seventeenth-Century Deccan,” *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 37 (2017), 549-69; an important contribution to the Iranian connections of the Persian historiography of the Deccan is made by Derek J. Mancin-Lander, “Tales Bent Backwards: Early Modern Local History in Persianate Transregional Contexts,” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 3rd series, 28 (2017), 23-54. For a useful general survey of Indo-Persian historiography, although only touching briefly on the Deccan, see Stephen F. Dale, “Indo-Persian Historiography” in Charles Melville (ed.), *Persian Historiography (A History of Persian Literature, vol. x)* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2012), 565-610.

7 Minorsky, “The Qara-qoyunlu and the Qutb-shāhs,” 53.

8 Faruk Sümer, *Kara Koyunlular, I. Cilt* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1967); no further volumes of this book were published, which unfortunately only takes events up to the death of Iskandar in 1428, leaving Jahānshāh’s rule untreated. The principal Qutbshahi source to which Sümer had access was Nīshāpūrī’s *Tārīkh-i Turkmānīyya*, discussed further below, of which there was a microfilm in Ankara. He seems to have been aware of Minorsky’s seminal article on Qaraqoyunlu–Qutbshahi links, but strangely it does not appear in his bibliography. A more recent political history is İsmail Aka, *İran’da Türkmen Hakimiyeti (Kara Koyunlular Devri)* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2001); for a recent study of an episode in Qaraqoyunlu history with further useful bibliography, see Evrim Binbaş, “The Jalayirid Hidden King and the Unbelief of Mohammad Qara Qoyunlu,” *Journal of Persianate Studies* 12/2 (2019), 206-36.

raqoyunlu history in the Qutbshahi period mean that these sources, even if they do on occasion preserve a genuine memory of events in the Middle East, cannot simply be “mined” for data. Although a reconstruction of Qaraqoyunlu history is beyond the scope of this chapter, it is hoped that by drawing attention to the complexity of the Qutbshahi accounts of the dynasty’s putative ancestors it may lay the groundwork for more nuanced approaches to the use of these texts for the study of the Qaraqoyunlu. I will examine the principal historical works composed at the Qutbshahi court, all of which treat the Qaraqoyunlu in distinct ways, looking at: the general history of Khūrshāh b. Qubād, known as the *Tārīkh-i Īlchī* or *Tārīkh-i Qutbī* (c. 1565); two verse histories, both entitled the *Nasabnāma-i Shahrīyārī*, which are closely related, although the first version was composed around 1580-8 and the second probably around 1612 or shortly after; and a set of three works that I argue can be attributed to an Iranian émigré working at the Qutbshahi court in the early seventeenth century, Maḥmūd b. ‘Abdallāh Nīshāpūrī, being the *Ma‘āsīr-i Qutbshāhī-i Maḥmūdī*, *Tārīkh-i Turkmāniyya* and the aforementioned *Tārīkh-i Sulṭān-Muḥammad*.

To enable the reader to follow the necessarily sometimes convoluted analysis that follows, a brief overview of the principal elements of Qaraqoyunlu and Qutbshahi dynastic history may be helpful.<sup>9</sup> The Qaraqoyunlu first emerge into the light of history in the late fourteenth century as a Turkmen grouping based in eastern Anatolia, especially in the Lake Van region, led by a certain Bayrām-Khvāja and later Qarā-Muḥammad, who was probably Bayrām-Khvāja’s nephew although the sources disagree about their exact relationship.<sup>10</sup> Much is uncertain about this early phase of Qaraqoyunlu history. The Qaraqoyunlu were associated with the Jalayirid dynasty, the Mongol generals who sought to continue the legacy of the Ilkhanate, ruling much of northern Iran, Iraq and parts of Anatolia. However, the nature of this association is debated in the later sources, and some Qutbshahi sources are keen to represent the Qaraqoyunlu as the Jalayirids’ equals rather than their subordinates, as we shall see. Certainly, Bayrām-Khvāja, Qarā-Muḥammad and the latter’s son Qarā-Yūsuf managed

9 The principal secondary literature on the political history of these dynasties is: Patrick Wing, *The Jalayirids* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016); Sümer, *Kara Koyunlular*; Aka, *İran’da Türkmen Hakimiyeti*; and Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shāhī Dynasty*. The Anatolian background is also covered in John Woods, *The Aqqoyunlu: Clan, Confederation, Empire* (Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah Press, 1999); Sara Nur Yıldız, “Pastoral Polities in the Post-Mongol World: Contextualizing Eastern Anatolia within the Geographical and Political Dynamics of the Mongol Successor States in the Middle East,” in Deniz Beyazit and Simon Rettig (eds), *At the Crossroads of Empires: 14th and 15th Century Anatolia* (Paris and Istanbul: Institut Français d’Études Anatoliennes Georges-Dumezil and De Boccard, 2012), 27-48.

10 Sümer, *Kara Koyunlular*, 45.

to occupy key forts and cities in eastern Anatolia and northern Iraq, presenting the Jalayirids with a *fait accompli*. The Jalayirids and the Qaraqoyunlu were swept away by Temür, who is said to have imprisoned Qarā-Yūsuf and the Jalayirid sultan Aḥmad together in Damascus, while according to other accounts they were held in captivity in Mamluk Egypt. After Temür's death in 1405, the Qaraqoyunlu, led by Qarā-Yūsuf, established their rule over much of the Jalayirid territories, seizing Baghdad from the last Jalayirid in 1412 and proclaiming Qarā-Yūsuf's son Pīr Budāq to be the legitimate successor to the Jalayirid sultan on the basis that he had been adopted by sultan Aḥmad during his imprisonment. Under Iskandar b. Qarā-Yūsuf (r. 1420-38), the Qaraqoyunlu clashed with the Timurid Shāhrukh, while Qaraqoyunlu rule reached its greatest extent under Iskandar's brother Jahānshāh (r. 1438-62), who was the first post-Mongol ruler to occupy most of the former territories of the Ilkhanate. He was also noted for his cultural patronage, himself composing Turkish poetry. Jahānshāh's sons were ineffective, and the dynasty was destroyed by its great rivals, the Aqqoyunlu Turkmen, who also originated from eastern Anatolia. According to later Qutbshahi tradition, the Aqqoyunlu sultan Ya'qūb sought to extirpate the last members of the dynasty, and Sulṭān-Qulī, Qarā-Yūsuf's great-great-grandson through the line of Iskandar, escaped to India. There, Sulṭān-Qulī entered the service of the Bahmani sultan before eventually establishing himself as ruler of Golconda in the chaos of the collapse of the Bahmani state at the beginning of the sixteenth century. He may never have adopted a regnal title such as sultan himself,<sup>11</sup> but his descendants did.

During the sixteenth century, the Qutbshahi state expanded to become the major South Indian sultanate, waging war against its neighbours both Muslim and Hindu, especially during the reign of the sultans Ibrāhīm (r. 1550-80) and Muḥammad-Qulī Qutbshāh (r. 1580-1612). The latter, the founder of Hyderabad and one of the earliest poets in Dakhnī (the Urdu of South India), was particularly famous as a cultural patron. Muḥammad-Qulī was succeeded by his nephew Sulṭān-Muḥammad (r. 1612-26), whose reign witnessed a particular efflorescence of historical writing. The Qutbshahi dynasty, increasingly under pressure from the Mughals' southern expansion, survived until 1687 when Aurangzeb finally annexed Hyderabad. Apart from their ancestry, the Qaraqoyunlu and the Qutbshahis shared a devotion to Shi'ism. Their common faith was a factor in encouraging the Deccani dynasty to maintain close diplomatic links to Safavid Iran, links which were reinforced by the large number of Iranian

11 Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shāhī Dynasty*, 15-17.

émigrés who found employment at their court.<sup>12</sup> Nonetheless, the Qutbshahis were not the only family in early modern India to claim Qaraqoyunlu descent. The Mughal commander and Turkish poet Bayrām Khān and his son, the distinguished litterateur and administrator ‘Abd al-Raḥīm Khān-i Khānān (1556-1627) also traced their descent back to the Qaraqoyunlu, and thus were relatives of the Qutbshahis.<sup>13</sup>

## 1 The Earliest Qutbshahi Historical Work: Khūrshāh b. Qubād’s *Tārīkh-i Qutbī* or *Tārīkh-i Īlchī*

Khūrshāh b. Qubād wrote the earliest history at the Qutbshahi court to come down to us. His *Tārīkh-i Īlchī* is a general history of Muslim states, with much detail on the Timurids and Safavids, of which only parts have been published to date.<sup>14</sup> Khūrshāh had originally been in the employ of the Nizamshahis, whom he had served as ambassador to the Safavid Shah Ṭahmasp, but he seems to have died in Golconda in 1565, and to have intended to dedicate a revised version of his history to the Qutbshahi ruler Ibrāhīm. The promise made in his preface to include a section dealing with the Qutbshahis remained unfulfilled, but Khūrshāh did devote a few folios to the Qaraqoyunlu,<sup>15</sup> drawing in part on Mīrkhvān’s famed *Rawzat al-Ṣafā* and Khvāndamīr’s *Ḥabīb al-Siyar*, which are mentioned in this part of the text, as well as a much less-known source, a history by Jamāl al-Dīn Maḥmūd Shīrāzī, which apparently dealt with “the sultans

12 On these links, see Mancini-Lander, “Tales Bent Backwards” and, more generally, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, “Iranians Abroad: Intra-Asian Elite Migration and Early Modern State Formation,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 51 (1992), 340-63.

13 Chhotubhi Ranchhodji Naik, *‘Abdu’-Raḥīm Khān-i Khānān and his Literary Circle* (Ahmedabad: Gujarat University, 1966), 2-5; *Bayram Han’un Türkçe Divanı*, ed. Münevver Tekcan (Istanbul: Beşir Kitapevi, 2007), 13-14; Sümer, *Kara Koyunlular*, 25. For a recent biography of these two men, although only briefly treating their backgrounds, see T.G.A. Raghavan, *Attendant Lords: Bairam Khan and Abdur Rahim. Courtiers and Poets in Mughal India* (Noida: Harper Collins, 2017).

14 Khwurshah bin Qubad al-Husaini, *Tarikh-i-Qutbi (also known as Tarikh-i Elchi-i-Nizam Shah): A work on the history of the Timurids. Chapter Five (from Timur to Akbar)*, ed. S. Mujahid Husain Zaidi (New Delhi: Jamia Millia Islamia, 1965); Khūrshāh b. Qubād, *Tārīkh-i Īlchī-i Nizām Shāh: Tārīkh-i Ṣafaviyya az āghāz tā sāl-i 972 hijrī qamarī*, eds Muḥammad Ridā Nasiri and Koichi Haneda (Tehran: Anjuman-i Athār va Mafākhir-i Farhangī, 1379). For an introduction to Khūrshāh and his work, see Anooshahr, *Turkestan*, 161-7. Discussions of the author are also to be found in Khūrshāh bin Qubad al-Husaini, *Tārīkh-i-Qutbī*, ed. Zaidi, 16-27; also Devare, *Short History of Persian Literature*, 278-82. For the unpublished parts of the text, I have consulted British Library, MS Add 23,513.

15 Khūrshāh, *Tārīkh-i-Qutbī*, British Library MS Add 23,513, fols 431a-436b.

and great men (*akābir*)” of the age.<sup>16</sup> One other source, the *Lubb al-Tawārikh* is cited for a highly negative view of the Qaraqoyunlu ruler Jahānshāh as “worthless, of low morals and oppressive” (*bī-i’tibār, bad-khalq, qahhār*).<sup>17</sup>

Khūrshāh portrays Qarā-Muḥammad Qaraqoyunlu and his son Qarā-Yūsuf as amirs in the retinue of the Jalayrid ruler Shaykh Uways and the chiefs of the Qaraqoyunlu *ulus* (tribal confederation) (*sardarī-yi ulūs-i Qarāquyūnlū ta’alluq bidīshān dāsht*). The first to rise to the sultanate was Qarā-Yūsuf, who in the course of vicious fighting around Syria with Temür had been captured alongside the Jalayrid Sultan Aḥmad. The two men were held in captivity in Egypt, where Qarā-Yūsuf’s son Pīr Budāq was born, and they agreed that if they should ever escape they would remain allied and Qarā-Yūsuf would rule in Tabriz. One day Qarā-Yūsuf dreamed that Temür removed a ring from his finger and placed it on his own. The dream is clearly intended to indicate the symbolic transfer of legitimate authority from Temür to the Qaraqoyunlu, while the tale of the agreement between the captive Qarā-Yūsuf and Sultan Aḥmad furnishes a further explanation of the emergence of Qaraqoyunlu rule at the expense of the Jalayrids. Later Qutbshahi works were to display a similar concern with legitimising the Qaraqoyunlu claim to rule but, with the partial exception of the *Tārikh-i Sulṭān-Muḥammad* discussed below, they all did so in very different ways.

Khūrshāh describes how after Temür’s withdrawal, Qarā-Yūsuf established himself as ruler in parts of Iraq, Azerbaijan and Iran. Qarā-Yūsuf had four sons: the aforementioned Pīr Budāq, who predeceased his father; Iskandar; Shāh Muḥammad; and Jahānshāh. Iskandar succeeded Qarā-Yūsuf, but his reign was marred by enmity with Shāhrukh, the Timurid ruler, who eventually disposed him and installed his brother Jahānshāh in his place. Iskandar was then murdered in Alinjaq fortress in Nakhchivan. Khūrshāh devotes considerable space (compared with other Qutbshahi sources) to describing the reign of Jahānshāh and the latter’s sons Pīr Budāq and Ḥasan-‘Alī. Pīr Budāq b. Jahānshāh gets the most positive write-up, being praised for his patronage of poetry and the arts. With the final defeat of Ḥasan-‘Alī by the Aqqoyunlu, Khūrshāh tells us, the dynasty was extinguished: “Ḥasan-‘Alī was captured in battle and in Shawwal 873 [April 1469] killed himself; the Qaraqoyunlu dynasty came to an end”

16 Ibid., fols 431b, 432a, 432b. This Jamāl al-Dīn Maḥmūd Shīrāzī died in 1555, and was a student of the noted philosopher Davānī, on whose works he wrote several commentaries. He was also important as a teacher of philosophy and medicine in both Shiraz and Isfahan. I have not been able to locate any manuscripts of his history. See further Ahab Bdaiwi, “Shī‘i Defenders of Avicenna: An Intellectual History of the Philosophers of Shiraz,” University of Exeter, 2015, 274-6.

17 Khūrshāh, *Tārikh-i Quṭbī*, British Library MS Add 23,513, fol. 432b.

(*dawlat-i Qarāqyūnlū bi-ākhir rasīd*).<sup>18</sup> Khūrshāh relates that members of the dynasty are buried in Tabriz, and with that his presentation of the Qaraqoyunlu draws to a close.

Khūrshāh's account, drawing largely on Iranian and Khurasani sources like the *Ḥabīb al-Siyar*, differs significantly from the presentation of Qaraqoyunlu history found in later Qutbshahi sources. This will become clear when we analyse them in more detail, but to anticipate our findings in brief the main difference is that Khūrshāh presents the Qaraqoyunlu dynasty as definitively dead at the time of writing, whereas later writers emphasised the continuities between Qaraqoyunlu and Qutbshahi kingship. It is not known, of course, whether Khūrshāh would have alluded to these links had he composed his promised Qutbshahi section of the *Tārīkh-i Īlchī*, but there are other notable differences in presentation. Given the Qutbshahi claim to descent from Iskandar b. Qarā-Yūsuf, later works tended to favour this ruler and to devote some attention to his descendants who were the crucial link to Sulṭān-Qulī, the founder of the Indian line. Pīr Budāq barely features in later Qutbshahi histories, while Jahānshāh, although perhaps the most famous of the Qaraqoyunlu, is often given fairly short shrift as Iskandar's great rival. Moreover, in contrast to later histories, Khūrshāh shows little interest in the Qaraqoyunlus' credentials either as ghazis or Shi'ites. Finally, the Aqqoyunlu sultan Ya'qūb, claimed by later Qutbshahi histories to have tried to extirpate the last members of the Qaraqoyunlu dynasty, does not appear at all in the Qaraqoyunlu section of the *Tārīkh-i Īlchī*, and the mentions of him in the passages discussing Aqqoyunlu history are very positive, lauding his "praiseworthy qualities and morals" (*ṣifāt-i ḥamīda u akhlāq-i pasandīda*).<sup>19</sup>

Khūrshāh's presentation of Qaraqoyunlu history thus seems to have been composed in complete ignorance of the Qutbshahi dynastic connection. This may reflect the fact that work was originally written, as Ali Anooshahr has argued, at the Mughal court upon Humāyūn's conquest of Delhi in 1555, and was only rededicated to the Qutbshahis because of Humāyūn's death in 1556; this would also explain the negative depiction of the Safavids in the text, despite the fact that the Qutbshahis were seeking an alliance with them.<sup>20</sup> Nonetheless, it is striking that Khūrshāh did not revise the text for his new patron, and the Qaraqoyunlu motif which was to play such a prominent and contested part in later Qutbshahi historical writing is not merely ignored but the possibility of a connection is even denied by the emphasis on the extinction of the dynasty.

18 Ibid., fol. 436b.

19 Ibid., fol. 439a.

20 Anooshahr, *Turkestan*, 166.



Perhaps few people in mid-sixteenth-century Golconda knew of the Qutbshahis' putative Qaraqoyunlu ancestry, suggesting that this myth had yet to be invented. Alternatively, maybe these stories of Qaraqoyunlu ancestry circulated only among the royal family at this stage, and thus Khūrshāh was unaware of them. At any rate, their absence from this text suggests that they cannot yet have formed an important part of how the Qutbshahis sought to present themselves to the outside world, for Khūrshāh tells us that he was given quite specific instructions concerning the writing of the *Tārīkh-i Īlchī* by Sultan Ibrāhīm – for example, to incorporate the memoirs of Shah Ṭahmasp.<sup>21</sup> Of course, it is possible that this instruction is also a literary fiction designed to bolster the authoritative nature of the historian's composition and to confirm its appeal to its courtly patron, but its existence confirms that the surviving manuscripts also contain at least some revisions done in Golconda, making the absence of Qaraqoyunlu references even more perplexing. In sum, even if *Tārīkh-i Quṭbī* has been transmitted to us in an unrevised and incomplete form, its treatment of the Qaraqoyunlu can only suggest that at this date the Qutbshahi connection to the dynasty was, at best, considered much less important than it was to become subsequently.

## 2 Fursī's *Nasabnāma*

The Qutbshahis were evidently intended to represent only a small part of Khūrshāh's presentation of Islamic dynasties, even had his work been completed. The earliest work devoted specifically to the Qutbshahis that has come down to us was compiled a couple of decades later. This is the *Nasabnāma-i Shahriyārī* of Fursī, composed for the fifth Qutbshahi ruler and founder of Hyderabad, Sultan Muḥammad-Qulī Quṭbshāh (r. 1580-1612), who is lavishly praised.<sup>22</sup> The poem is preserved in the Asiatic Society of Bengal in Calcutta, MS PSC 690, in 242 folios (see Figure 6.1), although as we shall see, other later versions derived from this text also exist.<sup>23</sup> A second manuscript that appears

21 Khwursah, *Tarikh-i Qutbi*, ed. Zaidi, 24-6.

22 Fursī, *Nasabnāma*, Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, MS PSC 690, fols 5b, 18a. There is a brief description of the manuscripts in Sherwani, *History of the Quṭb Shāhī Dynasty*, 333, 690-3, who claims the work is actually to be ascribed to Hiralāl Khūshdil, but this is a confusion with the second version of the work, as we will discuss below. It should be noted there is one further, unrelated, text entitled the *Nasabnāma* by the sixteenth-century Deccani Persian poet Ḥājī Abarqūhī. See Z.A. Desai, "Ḥājī Abarqūhī and his *Dīwān*," *Indo-Iranica* 15/1 (1962), 19-21.

23 For a description, see Wladimir Ivanow, *Concise Descriptive Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the Curzon Collection, Asiatic Society of Bengal* (Calcutta: Asiatic Society of



FIGURE 6.1 *Nasabnāma* of Fursī. Calcutta, Asiatic Society of Bengal, MS PSC 690, fols. 1b-2a, Exordium

to be of the same text is preserved in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, MS 89.159.4, although further investigation of the relationship between the two manuscripts is necessary, and as I have only had access to a handful of images of the Los Angeles manuscript this paper is necessarily based on the Calcutta text.<sup>24</sup>

The poet explicitly modelled his works on earlier historical epics by Firdawsī, Niẓāmī, Hātifī, Gunābādī, and the Mughal panegyrist of Akbar's court, Khvāja

Bengal, 1924), 307-9; it is also briefly mentioned in C.A. Storey, *Persian Literature: A Bibliographical Survey*, Section Two. M: *History of India* (London: Luzac and Co, 1939), 746.

24 For a description, see Pratapadiya Pal, *Indian Painting: A Catalogue of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art Collection* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1993), 335-9. The manuscript is not listed by Storey. I have not yet had the opportunity to examine this manuscript in full. I thank Marika Sarkar Nickson for drawing my attention to it.

Ḥusayn Ṣanā'ī, and the poem's concluding sections are devoted to praising these authors. Fursī, about whom nothing is known from external sources, may well have been an immigrant to Golconda, for he refers to "seeking refuge" with the Qutbshahis;<sup>25</sup> he was certainly a Shi'ite, for he frequently mentions his devotion to 'Alī, and the *Nasabnāma* concludes with praise of the Shi'ite imams.<sup>26</sup> It is possible, however, that the direct patron of the work was not the sultan, despite the lavish praises he receives, but his minister Mīr Shāhmīr Iṣfahānī, who is singled out for an encomium towards the end of the work, which concludes with description of Muḥammad-Qulī's marriage to Mīr Shāhmīr's daughter.<sup>27</sup> The disgrace and exile of Mīr Shāhmīr might explain why the extant manuscript is incomplete: although the text appears to be integral in MS Asiatic Society PSC 690, there are numerous spaces for illustrations which are left empty. These must have been intended to depict crucial moments in the dynasty's history, such as the birth of the dynastic founder Sulṭān-Qulī (there is space for an illustration on fol. 16b at this point in the text). The Los Angeles manuscript is illustrated (see Figure 6.2), although it seems that these illustrations were not added till later – possibly not until the end of the seventeenth century.<sup>28</sup>

It is interesting to note that despite its exclusively Qutbshahi theme, MS PSC 690 purports in its colophon to have been copied in Mughal Lahore by a certain Ṣadr al-Dīn Muḥammad Kātib al-Iṣfahānī, whose name suggests an Iranian émigré. Although the word Lahore appears to have been added later over a scratched-out original place of copying, its very existence suggests that the manuscript came into the hands of a Mughal patron, and the appeal of the work in North India is suggested by the existence of a copy in the library of the Sultan of Awadh in the nineteenth century, recorded in Alois Sprenger's catalogue.<sup>29</sup> It seems that this manuscript escaped the devastation of the Mutiny, and is the same one now housed in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art,

25 Fursī, *Nasabnāma*, MS PSC 690, fol. 18b, *kih justam panāh az dar-i Quṭbshāh*.

26 Ibid., fols 18b, 241.

27 Ibid., fol. 238a. On Mīr Shāhmīr, see Sherwani, *History of the Quṭb Shāhī Dynasty*, 174-5, 257-9.

28 Pal, *Indian Painting*, 339. A further fragment of the *Nasabnāma* preserved in the Salar Jung Museum (MS Persian A.Nm 1011) also has blank spaces for illustrations. This manuscript of 55 folios deals largely with the career of Ibrāhīm Quṭbshāh (r. 1550-1580) and is doubtless a section from a longer *Nasabnāma*.

29 Alois Sprenger, *A Catalogue of the Arabic, Persian and Hindu'stā'ny Manuscripts, of the Libraries of the King of Oudh* (Calcutta, 1854), no. 227; most of the library was destroyed during the Mutiny, although some of it was dispersed. Sprenger also refers to the two Asiatic Society manuscripts discussed here, confirming that both were part of the Society's collections by the mid-nineteenth century.



FIGURE 6.2 *Nasabnāma* of Fursī. Los Angeles County Museum of Art, MS 89.159.4. Praise of Sultan Muḥammad-Qulī with a later illustration of Sultan 'Abdallāh (r. 1627-72)

which also contains a reference to its ownership by the rulers of Awadh. One possible connection of the text with North India may be ‘Abd al-Raḥīm Khān-i Khānān, the Mughal administrator, patron and poet who supported a large literary circle including émigré Persian writers from both Iran and the Deccan. ‘Abd al-Raḥīm had also been the leading commander of the Mughal campaigns against the Deccan under Akbar, and a number of famed Deccani poets such as Zuhūrī had composed works in his honour.<sup>30</sup> As will be recalled, ‘Abd al-Raḥīm himself claimed Qaraqoyunlu descent, suggesting one possible reason for the appeal of the work. However, such a connection remains speculative.

Evidently, whoever the patron, MS PSC 690 was intended as a luxury manuscript for a courtly audience, as the spaces for illustrations suggest. Considerable confusion has beset the question of the date of composition owing to the existence of later variant texts. H.K. Sherwani, following Sprenger,<sup>31</sup> says it was composed in 1016/1607, which may be a mistake for 1019/1610, the date of the Los Angeles copy.<sup>32</sup> However, this cannot be the date of composition for, as Sherwani also notes, the poet Ṣanā’ī – active at Akbar’s court, who died in 996/1588 – is mentioned as still living.<sup>33</sup> As we will discuss further below, this debate evidently stems from a misapprehension as to the relationship between Fursī’s *Nasabnāma* and its later revision attributed to Hiralāl Khūshdil, and it seems clear that the work as represented by MS PSC 690 was composed shortly after Muḥammad-Qulī’s accession and marriage and certainly while Ṣanā’ī was alive, giving us a range of 1580-8.

Fursī evinces a keen interest in the dynasty’s antecedents, repeatedly emphasising the Qutbshahis’ lineage as descendants of sultans, and the first fifteen folios of the *Nasabnāma* are devoted to the “prehistory” of the dynasty in Anatolia and Iran. Despite his emphasis on the nobility of the Qutbshahis’ lineage, Fursī does not attempt to trace it back to the mythical Oghuz Khan as later works such as the *Tārīkh-i Turkmāniyya* and the *Tārīkh-i Sulṭān-Muḥammad* do. Rather, Fursī starts the story of the dynasty in Jalayirid times, with the life of Qarā-Muḥammad Turkmān and his battles against the Jalayirid Shaykh

30 Naik, *‘Abdu’r-Raḥīm Khān-i Khānān*, 280-459 on Persian poets patronised by Khān-i Khānān; *ibid.*, 117-73 for his role in the Deccani campaigns. For his library, which does not seem to have had a single fixed location, see John Seyller, *Workshop and Patron in Mughal India: The Freer Ramayana and Other Illustrated manuscripts of Abd al-Rahim (Artibus Asiae 42)* (Zurich: Museum Rietberg, 1999), 45-64.

31 Sprenger, *A Catalogue*, no. 227.

32 Pal, *Indian Painting*, 335.

33 On Ṣanā’ī, see D.N. Marshall, *Mughals in India: A Bibliographical Survey* (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1967), 431 (no 1639).

Uways.<sup>34</sup> Qarā-Muḥammad Turkmān is described as “a great king of the Turks” (*shahriyārī zi shāhān-i turk*), with his seat at Tabriz, although Fursī also emphasises his nomadic lifestyle:

بدش رمه و گله بیشمار ☆ ز قوم و قبیله برو صد هزار

He had countless flocks, and a hundred thousand tribesmen loyal to him<sup>35</sup>

Nonetheless, Fursī does not depict Qarā-Muḥammad as the vassal of Shaykh Uways, but rather as his equal. When the two rulers’ good relations broke down and their armies fought, the Turkmen emerged victorious and Qarā-Muḥammad sat again on his throne in Tabriz, waging war on the Tatars and Georgians. In the wake of his victory, one night Qarā-Muḥammad dreamed of a sun emerging from his shirt, which spread as far as India:

چو آمد در آن بوم تابنده نور ☆ سیاهی کفر از جهان شد بدور  
همه کشور هند ازو برافروخت ☆ بت و بنگر و رسم هندو بسوخت

When the shining light reached that land, the blackness of unbelief disappeared

All the land of India was lit by it, it burned Hindu idols, agreements, and customs.<sup>36</sup>

On awaking, he summoned an astrologer who interpreted the dream, predicting that India would be illuminated by the sun of the faith of Islam through Qarā-Muḥammad. The latter kept this dream secret until his death.

Such dreams of future dynastic greatness are a common device in Islamic historiography, and were doubtless taken seriously by both the author and audience as evidence of supernatural predictions of destiny.<sup>37</sup> For the moment, however, Fursī leaves the question of India and returns to dealing with northern Iran and Anatolia under Qarā-Muḥammad’s successors. The first of these

34 The Qutbshahi sources usually refer to this ruler as Sultan Uways; however, to avoid confusion, in accordance with the convention in modern historiography, I call him here Shaykh Uways.

35 Fursī, *Nasabnāma*, MS PSC 690, fol 5b.

36 Ibid., fol. 6a.

37 See Fischel, “Origin Narratives,” 85-6; for another example, Gottfried Hagen, “Dreaming Osmans: Of History and Meaning,” in Özgen Felek and Alexander D. Knysh (eds), *Dreams and Visions in Islamic Societies* (Albany, NY: SUNY, 2012), 99-122.

was his son Qarā-Yūsuf, who continued hostilities with the Jalayirids. His fierce battle with the Jalayirid sultan Aḥmad is depicted at some length and evidently, from the space left in the manuscript, was intended to be the subject of a large illustration, taking up nearly an entire folio.<sup>38</sup> After victory over Sultan Aḥmad, Qarā-Yūsuf entered Tabriz, where a great celebratory banquet is described. Here, a speech is attributed to Qarā-Yūsuf in which he expresses his intention to defy the invading Temür. Little is said directly about Temür's invasion, however, which in reality temporarily destroyed the incipient Qaraqoyunlu polity (if it can be described as such – it may have consisted of little more than a few strategic towns and pastures at this point, broadly subject to the Jalayirids in theory if not practice).<sup>39</sup> Qarā-Yūsuf's justice is praised, and then Fursī turns to the succession. Qarā-Yūsuf is said to have had twelve sons, of whom only Iskandar, the direct ancestor of the Qutbshahis, and Jahānshāh are mentioned by name – presumably as they both became ruler. Whereas today Iskandar, who immediately succeeded Qarā-Yūsuf, is given fairly short shrift by medieval and modern historians alike,<sup>40</sup> he is in many ways the tragic hero of this section of the *Nasabnāma*, which devotes four folios to his career. Fursī starts out by lavishly praising him:

هنرمند و درکار بیدار بود ☆ خردمند شاه سزاور بود

He was skilful and attentive, a wise and suitable king<sup>41</sup>

While Iskandar's royal attributes are stressed, those of Jahānshāh are passed over in silence. Yet according to Fursī, Iskandar, the epitome of royal virtue, was undone by the hatred felt for him by Shāhrukh, the Timurid ruler of Herat; indeed, Iskandar humiliated Shāhrukh by shooting him three times with an arrow, presumably in some sort of archery contest. Shāhrukh therefore summoned Jahānshāh, whom he incited against his elder brother Iskandar. In Fursī's account, Iskandar then took refuge in Rum, fighting against the Aqqoyunlu of Diyarbekir and eventually sending the head of their leader Qara 'Uthmān to Egypt, the Aqqoyunlu's enemy; Iskandar then bequeathed his crown to his son Alvand:

38 Fursī, *Nasabnāma*, MS PSC 690, fol. 6b.

39 For a survey of the situation, see Sümer, *Kara Koyunlular*, 37-54.

40 Iskandar lacks an entry of his own even in standard Turkish reference works such as *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* and the older Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı's *İslam Ansiklopedisi*. The most detailed modern treatment is in Sümer, *Kara Koyunlular*, 116-43.

41 Fursī, *Nasabnāma*, MS PSC 690, fol. 9a.

ترا دادم این کشور و گنج و کلاه ☆ که هستی پسندیده نیکخواه

To you I have given this land, this treasure and crown, for you are praiseworthy and faithful.<sup>42</sup>

Fighting continued between Iskandar and both Jahānshāh and the Aqqoyunlu, eventually obliging Iskandar to take refuge in Alinjaq castle, where he was murdered by his son Qubād.

Despite Fursī's evident sympathies for Iskandar, he recognises Jahānshāh as a legitimate sultan, ascending the throne after the death of his brother whom he greatly mourned despite their earlier confrontations.<sup>43</sup> However, Jahānshāh was persuaded by one of his generals, Šūfi Khalīl, that he needed to take action against his nephew Alvand, the ruler of Diyarbekir.<sup>44</sup> Twice defeated by Alvand, and inspired by the memory of his late brother, Jahānshāh decided to make peace with his nephew, granting him a palace and estate at Sa'dabad near Hamadan.<sup>45</sup> Before his death, Alvand enjoined his children to be obedient to the ruler, but also predicted the emergence of a future king from his line, based on a secret prophecy he had been told by an astrologer:

که از پشت این نورسیده پسر ☆ یکی تاجور بست خواهد کمر  
که در شهریاری سر آمد بود ☆ خریدار آل محمد بود  
چو گیتی بشاهی مسخر گردد ☆ جهان نور محراب و منبر کند  
بسی دارم ازوی گهر در نهفت ☆ که اکنون نشاید بگفتار سفت

After this young son has grown up, a king will don the belt [of rulership]  
He will be a leader in kingship, he will be the seeker of Muḥammad's  
house

When he subjugates the world with kingship, the world will be lit by the  
*miḥrāb* and *minbar*

Much secret essence about him do I have hidden which I cannot relate  
now.<sup>46</sup>

42 Ibid., fol. 11a.

43 Ibid., fol. 12a.

44 Ibid., fol. 12b.

45 Ibid., fol. 13a.

46 Ibid., fol. 13b.



After Alvand's death his son and grandson Pīr-Qulī and Uways-Qulī resided at Sa'dabad, honoured by Jahānshāh; Pīr-Qulī is given the title *kadkhudā* by Fursī in recognition of the fact that he did not assert a claim to the sultanate, but the family prophecy of future greatness and rule is again reiterated.<sup>47</sup> A detailed description of Uways-Qulī's nuptials and the birth of his son Sulṭān-Qulī follows, which was intended to be illustrated with a half-folio painting.<sup>48</sup> Pīr-Qulī consults an astrologer as to his grandson's future, and is told that

که از این نامور کودک شیرخواه ☆ چو بالا فرآید شود شهریار  
 برمدی جهان زیر دست آیدش ☆ بر اورنگ زرین نشست آیدش  
 بهندوستان تاج بر سر نهد ☆ در آن مرز محراب و منبر نهد

When this milk-loving child grows up, he will become king  
 Through his bravery, the world will be subject to him; he will sit on the  
 golden throne ...

In India will he be crowned; he will put *minbars* and *miḥrābs* in that  
 land.<sup>49</sup>

The deaths of Pīr-Qulī, Uways-Qulī and Jahānshāh (at the hands of the Aqqoyunlu) are described, followed by a passage in praise of Sultan Muḥammad-Qulī Qutb-Shah. Events then revert to the fifteenth century, with Sulṭān-Qulī, the last of Qarā-Yūsuf's line, advised by his mother to seek kingship in India out of fear for the vengeance of the Aqqoyunlu.<sup>50</sup> Evidently, the juxtaposition of these passages is intended to suggest that Sulṭān-Qulī is the sole legitimate successor of Jahānshāh, just as Muḥammad-Qulī is the legitimate successor of Sulṭān-Qulī, and to link Muḥammad-Qulī directly to the line of Qaraqoyunlu kingship. Sulṭān-Qulī and his journey to India is treated in some detail, with his future greatness again presaged by dreams and a meeting in Yazd with the Sufi saint Shāh Ni'matallāh II, who prophesied his future success. This meeting was intended to be illustrated with a full-page picture, suggesting its importance to the Qutbshahi dynastic myth, and indeed the encounter with Shāh Ni'matallāh was consistently emphasised in subsequent versions of this story.<sup>51</sup> The relevance of Shāh Ni'matallāh to the Qutbshahi legitimacy project doubtless lay

47 Ibid., fols 14a-b, 15a.

48 Ibid., fol. 16a.

49 Ibid., fols 16b-17a.

50 Ibid., fol. 18a.

51 Ibid., fols 18b-21b; see also Mancini-Lander, "Tales Bent Backwards," esp. 36, 45-9.

in the saint's close relationship with the Bahmanis, the Qutbshahis' predecessors.<sup>52</sup> Several of his descendants had settled in Bidar and intermarried with the royal family, and by appropriating this figure for the Qutbshahi dynastic myth it was doubtless intended to undermine the potency of this Bahmani association and claim Shāh Ni'matallāh's blessing for the Qutbshahi venture.

Fursī's account differs from that of later sources such as the *Tārīkh-i Sultān-Muḥammad Quṭb-Shāh* in its lesser level of detail; despite the much greater space devoted to these events than in the *Tārīkh-i Sultān-Muḥammad*, Fursī gives far less information about places of battles or political intrigues beyond the broad narrative sweep that I have depicted here. Temür and his dismemberment of the Jalayirid state is barely alluded to. Rather than legitimising the Qaraqoyunlu succession to the Jalayirids by some allusion to Temür's appointment of Pīr Budāq or Qarā-Yūsuf, as in Khūrshāh's version, Fursī rather makes the Qaraqoyunlu the Jalayirids' equals. The roles of both the Timurids and the Aqqoyunlu in Qaraqoyunlu history are somewhat downplayed. Even if Temür's son Shāhrukh plays an important role as Iskandar's antagonist, the Aqqoyunlu–Qaraqoyunlu wars are treated only sketchily. Fursī is unusual in his emphasis on the importance of Iskandar, compared with both earlier and later sources. Evidently, the poet's presentation of Qaraqoyunlu history is determined by the fact of the Qutbshahi descent from Iskandar, which necessitated emphasising his role. The bequest to Alvand may be seen as a way of stressing the continuity of Qaraqoyunlu to Qutbshahi rule by suggesting that he, not Jahānshāh, was Iskandar's legitimate successor. At the same time, the *Nasab-nāma* legitimises Qutbshahi rule by emphasising the dynasty's part in spreading Islam in India, fighting against the infidel there just as their Qaraqoyunlu forefathers had done battle against the infidel Georgians and Tatars. The continuity of jihad between the two dynasties was to become a popular theme in later works too. Fursī's account is important as it is the first to include some key elements of the Qutbshahi dynastic myth: the battles with the infidel, the foretelling of future rule in India through dreams, Sultān-Qulī's encounter with Shāh Ni'matallāh II and the emphasis on the importance of Iskandar. However, the ways in which these elements were presented developed over time.

52 See Muhammad Suleman Siddiqi, "Sufi-State Relationship under the Bahmanids (AD 1348-1538)," *Revista degli Studi Orientali* 64 (1990), 71-96, esp. pp. 87-92; it should be noted that especially towards the end of the dynasty, relations between the Bahmanis and the Ni'matallāhi clan were not always easy.

### 3 The *Nasabnāma* Attributed to Hiralāl Khūshdil

This poem is represented by two manuscripts: London, British Library, MS India Office Islamic 2645, containing 137 folios; and Calcutta, Asiatic Society of Bengal MS PSC 691. Unfortunately the Calcutta version is in such bad condition that it is not readily useable without risking further damage to the manuscript.<sup>53</sup> I was able to see enough of it on a visit to Calcutta in 2016 to satisfy myself that Wladimir Ivanow's description of the manuscript was broadly accurate and the text was, as far as can be ascertained, identical with that of the London manuscript, although it was not possible to carry out a full comparison.

This work is in large part a reworking and abridgement of Fursī's *Nasabnāma*, although unlike the latter it continues down to the accession of Sulṭān-Muḥammad, suggesting a date of completion around 1612. The question of authorship is somewhat confused. It is attributed by Ivanow and Sherwani, doubtless on the basis of Sprenger, to a certain Hiralāl Khūshdil, a secretary to Muḥammad-Qulī's son Ḥaydar, whose names appear in the colophon and a concluding verse, where the book is referred to as the *Tavārikh-i Quṭbshāh*.<sup>54</sup> It has entered the scholarly literature under this title,<sup>55</sup> although in the text of the poem the work is repeatedly referred to as the *Nasabnāma*. Even more confusingly, on folio 3a, a verse mentions Fursī, the author of the previously discussed poem. Indeed, not only is the work a reworking of Fursī's but many verses are even identical with the earlier poem.<sup>56</sup> This suggests that in fact the

53 Ivanow, *Concise Descriptive Catalogue*, 309-10. It should be noted that this damage is not new and was already remarked on by Ivanow.

54 *Nasabnāma*, British Library, MS 10 Islamic 2645, fol. 137a.

55 Sherwani, *History of the Quṭb Shāhī Dynasty*, 690; cf. Devare, *Short History of Persian Literature*, 273-4.

56 Space precludes a full comparison, but consider the following verses from each version in praise of Muḥammad-Qulī and on the composition of the book. Verses common to, or very similar in, both versions are given in red. As can be seen, while the texts are evidently independent, complete verses from Fursī's original version are reused or slightly adapted in the Hiralāl Khūshdil text. Calcutta, Asiatic Society of Bengal; MS PSC 690, fol. 5a:

به فرسی نیز بگشای گوش \* وزو بر شکفتی سخنها بیوش  
 درین نامه بس درفشانی کم \* که غواص بحر معانی کم  
 نکاح عروس شاه زنجار \* به بندم بداماد شاه تثار  
 نودی فرستم بروم و حجاز \* زشادی آورم بر خطا ترنگاز  
 بکافور خشک کم مشکبر \* به بندم سیه زلف شب بر سحر  
 ز زنگ آورم زنگی بافسوس \* سپارم بدست سواران روس  
 قلم چون سوی دوات آورم \* ز ظلمات آب حیات آورم

colophon might be interpreted as meaning that Hiralāl Khūshdil is the copyist, rather than the author. These complexities notwithstanding, I refer to this version as the Hiralāl Khūshdil recension purely to differentiate it from the earlier version represented by MS PSC 690, hereafter referred to as the Calcutta text.

Despite the lack of clarity about whether Fursī was the author of all of the recension in its current form, it seems there were two stages of reworking of the *Nasabnāma*. First, one seems to have been undertaken by Fursī himself, during the reign of Muḥammad-Qulī, when additional passages praising the sultan were added which are not present in MS PSC 690. Muḥammad-Qulī is praised extravagantly and at length in the introductory portions of the poem as the work's patron (*mamdūḥ*) with no mention of Sulṭān-Muḥammad, with whose reign the work concludes. Indeed, these encomia make it quite clear that Muḥammad-Qulī was alive at the time of their composition. However, Muḥammad-Qulī's reign is treated extremely briefly compared with those of his predecessors, suggesting that these revisions were quite superficial; possibly given the evident incomplete nature of Fursī's original Calcutta version, he sought a new patron with the advent of a new ruler.

Second, after Muḥammad Qulī's death a revision (possibly by Hiralāl Khūshdil) updated the work to take account of the sultan's demise and the accession of Sulṭān-Muḥammad. However, it has to be said that this second revision was rather amateurishly done, as is suggested by the preservation of the initial exordium dedicated to Muḥammad-Qulī, stretching over three folios,<sup>57</sup> and the name of Fursī in the text. This may suggest that rather than actually reading the poem, Hiralāl Khūshdil's patron (perhaps Prince Ḥaydar, perhaps Sulṭān-Muḥammad) was meant to be impressed with the size and appearance of the book.

British Library, MS 10 Islamic 2645, fol. 15a:

سخنهای شایسته آبدر \* رسانم بر تاجور شهریار  
 مجد قلی شاه خورشید چهر \* که قطب زمین است و مهر سپهر  
 چو بافسر او نطق گویا کنم \* مر این نامه بر نامش انشا کنم  
 کنم خامه را ابر گوهر فرش \* پیالای صحراس کافور بوش  
 نکاح عروس شاه زنگار \* به بندم بداماد شاه تبار  
 نویدم فرستم بروم از حجاز \* ز شام آورم بر ختن ترنگاز  
 ز زنگ آورم زنگی بافسوس \* سپارم بدست شه روم و روس  
 عرب زاده را بزور قلم \* رسانم به نزدیک شاه عجم

57 *Nasabnāma*, British Library, MS 10 Islamic 2645, fols 11a-13b.

While this Hiralāl Khūshdil text is certainly considerably shorter than the original Fursī version, being around half its length,<sup>58</sup> not all alterations can be attributed to the exigencies of space. The introductory parts of the Hiralāl Khūshdil recension are considerably more prolix than in Fursī's original, stretching over fifteen folios as opposed to five and containing an especially detailed account of the Prophet Muḥammad's *mi'rāj*. Similarly, the concluding encomia of the imams and the great epic poets have been replaced with praise of martial tools – the bow, arrow, horse and elephant – although 'Alī is still frequently lauded, both here and elsewhere in the poem. Beyond observing that our extant manuscript represents a merging of two different texts, one written while Muḥammad-Qulī was still alive and one after his demise, it is not possible, to ascertain which parts (if any) were actually written by Hiralāl Khūshdil and which were by Fursī himself.

The Hiralāl Khūshdil version is divided into four *maqālas* after the introductory sections of exordia to the Prophet, 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib and Muḥammad-Qulī Quṭbshāh. The first *maqāla* deals with the origins of the dynasty and the early career of Sulṭān-Qulī (fols. 15b-50a); the second deals with the Qutbshahi dynasty proper, Sulṭān-Qulī's accession to the Sultanate, his death and eventual succession by Ibrāhīm (fols. 50b-108a); some detail is given on the intervening eight years when the state was dominated by Sulṭān-Qulī's son Jamshīd, but the focus remains on Ibrāhīm, doubtless because he was the ancestor of later sultans.<sup>59</sup> The third *maqāla* (fols. 108a-126b) is devoted to Ibrāhīm's reign (1550-80). The fourth and final *maqāla* (fols. 126b-137a) is devoted to the reign of Muḥammad-Qulī. It is evident that the initial sections of the fourth *maqāla* were composed during Muḥammad-Qulī's reign, for whereas the previous portions of the text give sultans Sulṭān-Qulī and Ibrāhīm the epithet *nuwwira qabruhu* (may his grave be illuminated), Muḥammad-Qulī is given the epithet *khullida mulkuhu* (may his reign be perpetuated).<sup>60</sup>

A full analysis of the ways in which Fursī's original text was adapted in the Hiralāl Khūshdil version must be left to another occasion. However, it is clear that the revised-version text contains significant differences of both emphasis and factual information. Whereas the Calcutta text had stressed the royal ancestry of the dynasty, this gets much less emphasis in the later version, which instead highlights the Shi'ite allegiances of the Qutbshahis. Sultan

58 Calcutta MS PSC 690 has 21 lines per page, while London 10 Islamic 2645 has 19 lines per page. Both consist of four columns containing one hemistich each, representing two complete *bayts* per line; Calcutta therefore contains around 20,000 verses in total, while London has around 10,000.

59 Cf. Sherwani, *History of the Quṭb Shāhī Dynasty*, 38.

60 *Nasabnāma*, British Library, MS 10 Islamic 2645, fol. 127a

Muḥammad-Qulī, for example, is singled out as one of only two Shi'ite kings, the other being Shah 'Abbās of Iran. In the description of the origins of the dynasty, the Hiralāl Khūshdil version gives only twenty couplets (*bayts*) (as opposed to around sixty in the Calcutta text) to the career of Qarā-Muḥammad, who is described as a Turkmen king subject to the Jalayirid ruler of Baghdad. No detail is given on their clashes, nor is Shaykh Uways mentioned by name; the Qaraqoyunlu and the Aqqoyunlu are introduced as two Turkmen peoples (*qawm*)<sup>61</sup> subject to the Jalayirids.<sup>62</sup> The more universal kingship of the Turks evidently envisaged in the Calcutta text is replaced here with a more limited, Qaraqoyunlu version; when Qarā-Yūsuf succeeds his father, the Hiralāl Khūshdil text remarks,

قرا یوسف آمد بجای پدر ☆ نهاد افسر ترکمانی بسر

قره قاینلو لشکر ترکمان ☆ به بستند فرمان اورا میان

Qarā-Yūsuf came in the place of his father and placed the Turkmen crown on his head

The Qara-Qoyunlu army of Turkmen obeyed his command.<sup>63</sup>

Completely absent is any mention of Qarā-Muḥammad's dream presaging the Qaraqoyunlus' resurrection in Hindustan.

The account of Qarā-Yūsuf's reign is more detailed, but again differs significantly from that in Fursī's original text as represented by the Calcutta manuscript. Qarā-Yūsuf's relations with Temür are briefly discussed, but the former is depicted largely as the scourge of the *mulūk-i tavāyif*, the subordinate kings such as the Muzaffarids, and the reader is advised to refer to the *Zafarnāma* for a detailed account of Qarā-Yūsuf's wars, presumably meaning the famous history of Temür of that name by Sharaf al-Dīn Yazdī. This whole section is very short compared with the Calcutta text: together, Qarā-Muḥammad and Qarā-Yūsuf are allotted just a folio and a half of text (fols. 15b-16a, 84 *bayts*), compared with four whole folios in the Calcutta version (PSC 690, fols. 5a-9a, approx. 300 *bayts* with spaces for two illustrations).

61 Conventionally, we would translate this as 'tribe'; but it is not clear that the term *qawm* retained these connotations in the Deccan.

62 *Nasabnāma*, British Library, MS 10 Islamic 2645, fol. 15b.

63 *Ibid.*, fol. 16a.

The treatment of Jahānshāh and Iskandar is similarly abridged, with the passages dealing with Iskandar's reign taking up merely half a side of a folio (fol. 16b) as opposed to three complete folios (i.e. six pages, fols. 9b-12a) in the Calcutta text. Again, the emphasis is quite different, Jahānshāh emerging in a rather more positive light in the Hiralāl Khūshdil text. Discussing the sons of Qarā-Yūsuf, the poet is here at pains to stress the positive attributes of both, describing them as "two candles alight in one candle-holder, two suns of a single auspicious sign of the zodiac".<sup>64</sup> Jahānshāh is also praised for building numerous mosques and pulpits in Tabriz, his capital.<sup>65</sup> Alvand's position is left considerably more ambiguous than in Fursī's original text. There is no mention of his father Iskandar's bequest of his territory to him, nor is it made clear that he was governor of Diyarbekir – and the Aqqoyunlu are completely absent from the narrative. The text alludes to clashes between Alvand and Jahānshāh, describing how the latter eventually allotted Alvand an estate at Sa'dabad where he retired from fighting. Alvand's son and grandson Pīr-Qulī and Uways-Qulī are briefly introduced, and the poet describes how they too were honoured by Jahānshāh.<sup>66</sup> It is only at this point that the poet introduces the first dream narrative, wherein Uways-Qulī is reported to have dreamed of a sun emerging from his shirt which headed for India where it burned up idolatry. This is interpreted by the astrologer as presaging the emergence from their line of a great king in India.<sup>67</sup>

Of the early Qaraqoyunlu, it is only to Sulṭān-Qulī that much attention is devoted in the Hiralāl Khūshdil text. His birth is recorded as having taken place on 2 Jumada II 850/8 August 1446, and a fortune teller (*fāl-bīn*) immediately recognised the "signs of kingship" that Uways-Qulī's son bore. When Sulṭān-Qulī was ten years old, his father asked him a series of fourteen questions, which are recorded in detail with his replies, all emphasising Sulṭān-Qulī's maturity, fitness to rule and devotion to the Shi'ite faith.<sup>68</sup> The deaths of Uways-Qulī and Jahānshāh follow, leaving Sulṭān-Qulī as the legitimate claimant of the Qaraqoyunlu throne. The treatment of Sulṭān-Qulī, his dream, his meeting with Shāh Ni'matallāh II and his journey to India broadly follows that of the Calcutta text, although the Hiralāl Khūshdil version adds certain details such as the childhood questioning by his father and his exact date of birth. In this version of the Qaraqoyunlu story, as in the Calcutta text, it is the Aqqoyunlu Uzun Ḥasan, the killer of Jahānshāh, who appears as the great enemy of the

64 Ibid., fol. 16b, *dū sham' furū-zanda dar yak lakan, dū khūrshīd-i yak burj-i nik-akhtarī*.

65 Ibid., fol. 17a.

66 Ibid., fols 17a-b.

67 Ibid., fols 17b-18a.

68 Ibid., fols 18b-20b.

Qaraqoyunlu, forcing Sulṭān-Qulī to take refuge in India. There is no mention of Jahānshāh's sons Pīr Budāq and Ḥasan-ʿAlī, while their great Aqqoyunlu antagonist in later versions of the story, Yaʿqūb, is entirely absent.

#### 4 The Works of Maḥmūd b. ʿAbdallāh Nishāpūrī

The most prolific historian to write at the Qutbshahi court was Maḥmūd b. ʿAbdallāh Nishāpūrī; symptomatic of the neglect of Qutbshahi historiography, his name appears nowhere in standard reference sources, and only thanks to very recent and ongoing research is even a preliminary picture of his works and activities emerging. He tells us that he migrated from Khurasan to India in 1582 as result of the Uzbek attacks on his homeland, and served Muḥammad-Qulī Quṭbshāh,<sup>69</sup> although he later returned home and entered the service of Shah ʿAbbās. Nonetheless, he evidently maintained his connections to the Deccan, and he was still alive in 1635 as the internal evidence of his *Tārīkh-i Quṭbshāhī-yi Maḥmūdī*, discussed below, suggests. In addition to the histories of the Qaraqoyunlu and Qutbshahis discussed here, he was the author of a history of Shah ʿAbbās entitled the *Khulāṣa-i ʿAbbāsī*,<sup>70</sup> and a work that mixed both geographical and historical elements: the *Jāmiʿ al-Barr waʾl-Baḥr*. The latter composition, preserved in manuscripts in Yazd and Islamabad, is unusual for the extensive information about Southeast Asia that it contains, reflecting a lesser-known side to the Qutbshahis' engagement with the outside world.<sup>71</sup> Here, we focus only on Nishāpūrī's works that engage with the Qaraqoyunlu theme, which all seem to have been dedicated to Sulṭān-Muḥammad Quṭbshāh.

##### 4.1 *The Maʿāṣir-i Quṭbshāhī-i Maḥmūdī*

The name of the author of the *Maʿāṣir-i Quṭbshāhī-i Maḥmūdī*, preserved in British Library MS India Office Islamic 841, appears in the preface as Muḥammad b. ʿAbdallāh al-Nishāpūrī. However, Muḥammad is simply a variant of, or scribal error for, Maḥmūd – as is suggested by the title of the work, which evidently alludes to the author's name. Nishāpūrī relates that, out of thankfulness to the

69 Maḥmūd b. ʿAbdallāh Nishāpūrī, *Maʿāṣir-i Quṭbshāhī-i Maḥmūdī*, British Library, MS 10 Islamic 841, fol. 4b.

70 Hyderabad, MS Salar Jung, Persian Hist. 237, mentioned by Mancini-Lander, "Tales Bent Backwards," 31, n. 20. The manuscript does not give Nishāpūrī's *nisba*, but refers to the author as Maḥmūd b. ʿAbdallāh; it refers too to the latter's thirty years of service to the Qutbshahis, leaving no doubt that the author is Nishāpūrī (MS Salar Jung, Persian Hist. 237, p. 4). This is a short work of 195 pages, incomplete at beginning and end.

71 This work is currently the subject of a Paris doctoral dissertation at EPHE by Roghiyeh Ebrahimi entitled "A Persian window onto early modern Southeast Asia: edition, translation and annotation of the *Jāmʿa al-Bar waʾl-baḥr*".



ruler Muḥammad-Qulī, whose compassion he praises (fol. 4b), he undertook to write this account in three volumes that would commemorate his praiseworthy character and the wars of Muḥammad-Qulī's ancestors with the Indian infidel. However, the work in its present form dates to the reign of Muḥammad-Qulī's successor Sulṭān-Muḥammad or even later, as we shall see.<sup>72</sup> Nishāpūrī also alludes to having undertaken the hajj and travelling to Basra and Iraq. It is there, it seems, that he conceived the idea of composing a history of the Safavids for his Qutbshahi patron, as he describes in ornate prose,<sup>73</sup> although it is also clear that this went through several redactions and never seems to have been completed.<sup>74</sup> The first section of the *Ma'āsir* deals with the Safavids' lineage, emphasising their descent from 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib from both the paternal and maternal sides (fol. 5a). Subsequent chapters then discuss at length the emergence of the Safavid state. It is at this point that a deep enmity arose between the Safavid ancestor Junayd and the Qaraqoyunlu, commonly thought by modern scholars to have originated from rivalry over their Shi'ite credentials. The rivalry between Jahānshāh and Junayd led to the latter allying himself with, and marrying into the family of, the Aqqoyunlu Sunni Uzun Ḥasan.<sup>75</sup> Perhaps surprisingly in view of his dual loyalties to both dynasties, Nishāpūrī makes no attempt to sweep this rivalry under the carpet, although as a fervent Shi'ite partisan he does not emphasise Uzun Ḥasan's Sunnism, and Jahānshāh's connection with Qutbshahis is not explicitly made (although presumably it would have been clear to his audience). Referring to the career of Junayd in the late fifteenth century, Nishāpūrī writes that "the fire of jealousy" was lit in Jahānshāh's heart when he heard of Junayd's efforts to seize power (*dar āyin-i 'azmat u asās-i salṭanat sa'ī-yi balīgh mīfarmūd*).<sup>76</sup> Indeed, it was on hearing of Jahānshāh's hatred and envy (*rashk u ḥasad*) that Junayd set off on his jihad against the Georgians.<sup>77</sup> This negative treatment of Jahānshāh does, however, coincide with the way he is represented in Fursī's *Nasabnāma*, and may reflect the Qutbshahis' own negative memory of their ancestor Iskandar's brother.

Nishāpūrī gives a detailed account of the rise of the Safavids from the time of Shaykh Ṣafī and the emergence of the Safavid state in his own day, describing in great detail Ṭahmasp's death shortly before he himself left Iran, and the early reign of Shah 'Abbās. Much space is devoted to the continual battles

72 Nishāpūrī, *Ma'āsir*, MS 10 Islamic 841, fol. 3b-4a.

73 Ibid., fols 4b-5a.

74 Cf. Minorsky, "The Qara-qoyunlu and the Qutb-shāhs," 51.

75 Kathryn Babayan, "Jonayd," *Encyclopaedia Iranica* (London and Costa Mesa, CA: Encyclopaedia Iranica Foundation, 1982-).

76 Nishāpūrī, *Ma'āsir*, MS 10 Islamic 841, fol. 9b.

77 Ibid., fols 9b-10a.

between the Ottomans and Safavids, in the midst of which Nishāpūrī introduces his account of a Qutbshahi embassy to the Safavids, led by a certain Qanbar ‘Alī Mashhadī, which coincided with the arrival of an embassy from Samarqand. This provides an opportunity to introduce a discussion of Qutbshahi history, for Qanbar ‘Alī “saw it necessary to explain some of the deeds, battles and holy wars that those *mujāhid* kings [the Qutbshahis] had undertaken in the land of infidelity against the polytheists”.<sup>78</sup> The precise purpose of the embassy is not articulated, but it seems likely that it was connected with the manoeuvres of the Deccani sultans to find allies against the Mughal advance southwards.

Nishāpūrī starts by describing the Deccan as formerly a heartland of unbelief, which the Bahmani sultans did nothing to extirpate. It was only when the divine will decreed that Telangana should be cleansed of unbelief that Sulṭān-Qulī Quṭb al-Mulk emerged to undertake this task. The rise of the Qutbshahis is thus envisioned as divinely ordained, and their rule is legitimised through their fight against *kufṛ*. The dynasty’s Qaraqoyunlu origins are treated briefly, with no reference to the Oghuz origin myth, but rather stressing their role as *pādshāhs*:

[Sulṭān-Qulī] was a fruit of the tree of rule of the sons of prince Iskandar b. amir Qarā-Yūsuf; for sixty-three years, rule of the land of Azerbaijan, Iraq, the Arabs and the Persians was shared between the sons of that great ruler, Mīrzā Iskandar, and Jahānshāh. As is recorded in histories, they had fierce wars with the Timurids, and were perfectly magnificent, glorious and powerful. When the turn to rule passed from this family to Ḥasan, king of the Aqqoyunlu, and their sovereignty was cut short, king Sulṭān-Qulī Quṭb al-Mulk, at the time of Padshah Ya‘qūb, because of the hatred of his enemies, conceived the desire to travel to India with his uncle.<sup>79</sup>

This work represents one of the earliest instances of the importance of Ya‘qūb as the great enemy of the Qaraqoyunlu, displacing Uzun Ḥasan who had played this role in earlier accounts.

Nishāpūrī also relates the story of Sulṭān-Qulī’s encounter with Shah Nī‘matallāh II at Yazd and how he entered Bahmani service owing to the sultan’s liking for Turkish soldiers, and recounts Sulṭān-Qulī’s rise to power.<sup>80</sup> Nishāpūrī insists that the Qutbshahis are unlike other Deccan dynasties – the

78 Ibid., fol. 86a.

79 Ibid.

80 Ibid., fol. 86b.

Nizamshahis, Adilshahis and Baridshahis – in not having originated as rebellious soldiers. Rather, as long as the Bahmani sultan lived, Sulṭān-Qulī remained loyal to him. The legitimacy of the Qutbshahis is also stressed on the basis of their historic allegiance to the Safavids, with Shah Ismāʿīl's name read in the *khutba* in Golconda.<sup>81</sup> There follows a brief account of Qutbshahi history down to the present ruler, Sulṭān-Muḥammad, which repeatedly emphasises the sultans' role as *mujāhids* fighting *kuffār* in the holy wars (variously termed *ghazā* or *jihād*).

The account of Sulṭān-Muḥammad's reign is largely devoted to the attempt by the Mughal prince Salīm (later Jahāngīr) to invade the Deccan; Salīm is portrayed as being under the influence of European priests, not merely having adopted Frankish clothes but also secretly converting to Christianity.<sup>82</sup> Fortunately, Nishāpūrī relates, the great victories of the true-believing Shah 'Abbās over the Uzbeks and Ottomans so inspired him with fear that he was obliged to take measures against the Franks. Implicitly, Shah 'Abbās thereby also saves the Deccan.<sup>83</sup> The next chapter returns to Asia Minor, describing the outbreak of the Celali revolts around Tokat and Amasya. As well as a detailed discussion of Anatolian affairs, including an embassy of the Girayid Khan of the Crimea, Nishāpūrī also devotes considerable attention to the Safavids' Uzbek enemies. It is evident that these sections are lifted more or less word for word from Iskandar Beg Munshī's famous history of Shah 'Abbās, the *Tārīkh-i 'Ālam-ārā-yi Abbāsī*, although in places the annalistic structure of that work is discarded and some material is abridged.<sup>84</sup> Indeed, in places even material dealing with the Deccan and the Qutbshahis is drawn directly from the *'Ālam-ārā*.<sup>85</sup> The text follows the *'Ālam-ārā-yi Abbāsī* (with abridgements) up to 1035/1626, remarkably even including the Turkish-language text of a letter sent in Ramadan/May of that year by the Ottomans concerning the siege of Baghdad.<sup>86</sup>

81 Ibid., fol. 87a.

82 Perhaps coincidentally, this claim was also made about the Qaraqoyunlu Shāh Muḥammad, see Binbaş, "The Jalayirid Hidden King."

83 Nishāpūrī, *Ma'āsīr*, MS 10 Islamic 841, fols 90a-91b.

84 For example, compare the account of the year 1022 on fol. 111a with the same in Iskandar Beg Munshī, *Tārīkh-i 'Ālam-ārā-yi Abbāsī*, ed. Īraj Afshar (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Amīr Kabīr, 1377), Vol. 11, 861ff.

85 Compare the accounts of the Nizamshahi embassy and that of Sulṭān-Muḥammad Qutbshāh under AH 1030 in Iskandar Beg Munshī, *Tārīkh-i 'Ālam-ārā-yi Abbāsī*, Vol. 11, 964-5 and Nishāpūrī, *Ma'āsīr*, MS 10 Islamic 841, fol. 147b.

86 Nishāpūrī, *Ma'āsīr*, MS 10 Islamic 841, fols 169a-170b; cf. Iskandar Beg Munshī, *Tārīkh-i 'Ālam-ārā-yi Abbāsī*, Vol. 11, 1053-6. The date of Ramadan occurs only in the *Ma'āsīr*, suggesting, as argued below, that he had access to a slightly different version of the text than that published by Afshar.

Given the numerous omissions from the *Ālam-ārā-yi 'Abbāsī* in the *Ma'āsir*, it is intriguing that Nishāpūrī assumed that this Turkish letter would be both of interest to and comprehensible to his Qutbshahi audience. The work concludes with a highly abridged version of the twelve *maqālas* with which Iskandar Beg had prefaced his work, concluding with praise of the gardens of Isfahan.<sup>87</sup> The work lacks colophon or obvious conclusion, suggesting that either the manuscript is incomplete or possibly the work is unfinished. Certainly, the initial promise to record the deeds of the Qutbshahis is carried out only in the most perfunctory manner. One reason may have been the death of Sulṭān-Muḥammad, which occurred in January 1626.<sup>88</sup> Clearly, however, this also presents problems, as Iskandar Munshī's work is said to have been completed in 1628 or later,<sup>89</sup> in which case one might wonder how Nishāpūrī had access to it. However, as is known from other Islamic historical works, they often circulated in drafts and multiple versions; it is not impossible that Nishāpūrī had access to some such preliminary version of the *Ālam-ārā-yi 'Abbāsī*.<sup>90</sup> More problematic still is the question of how Nishāpūrī had information about a letter sent in May 1626 but not about the death of his own patron in January of the same year. It is possible that he continued the work, hoping to rededicate it to the new ruler, but then abandoned that scheme.

## 5 The *Tārīkh-i Turkmāniyya*

The *Tārīkh-i Turkmāniyya* appears to survive in a unique manuscript copied in Calcutta in January 1818, now held in the British Library as India Office MS Islamic 2033. However, the text itself seems to date to the early seventeenth century and was probably completed in the reign of Sulṭān-Muḥammad; Muḥammad-Qulī, who appears to have commissioned the work, is referred to with epithets indicating that he was already dead.<sup>91</sup> It must be said that the present copy is rather sloppily done, and that may account for some of the apparent peculiarities of the work – of which the most notable is that it deals

87 Nishāpūrī, *Ma'āsir*, MS 10 Islamic 841, fol. 180b.

88 Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shāhī Dynasty*, 397.

89 See Roger M. Savory, "Eskandar Beg Torkamān Monši," *Encyclopaedia Iranica* (London and Costa Mesa, CA: Encyclopaedia Iranica Foundation, 1982-).

90 See for example, Frédéric Bauden, "Maqriziana 11: Discovery of an Autograph Manuscript of al-Maqrīzī: Towards a Better Understanding of His Working Method Analysis," *Mamluk Studies Review* 12 (2008), 51-118.

91 Maḥmūd b. 'Abdallāh Nishāpūrī, *Tārīkh-i Turkmāniyya*, British Library, MS 10 Islamic 2033, fol. 228b.

first with events under Qarā-Muḥammad and Qarā-Yūsuf in great detail (fols. 1b-161a) and then suddenly, with neither warning nor explanation, moves to Telangana, telling of the Qutbshahis' battles to establish themselves there and against other local powers such as the Adilshahis down to the reign of Sultan Ibrāhīm (fols. 161b-229b). Thus, the story of Iskandar and Jahānshāh, and Sulṭān-Qulī's migration to India – so crucial to earlier writers, such as Fursī – is entirely missing. It is possible that this sudden, wrenching transition is to be explained by copyist error or a lacuna in the manuscript from which the copyist was working, and this explanation is suggested by the author's statement in his introduction that he intended to deal with the "praises and fierce battles of Qarā-Muḥammad, Qarā-Yūsuf and their sons".<sup>92</sup> If so, however, this would presumably mean that a large number of pages had gone missing. It is possible that the author (or a subsequent copyist) simply decided to dismiss these apparently controversial events. The same introductory statement might be taken in support of this, for only Qarā-Muḥammad and Qarā-Yūsuf are mentioned by name, and by their "sons" the author might conceivably mean simply the Qutbshahis. The absence of any mention of Iskandar, Jahānshāh, Alvand or Sulṭān-Qulī before he arrived in India certainly suggests that there is more at stake than simply some missing text.

The author's name is given in the description of the reasons for composition (*sabab-i ta'lif*) at the beginning as Ibn 'Abdallāh Maḥmūd Nishāpūrī, i.e. Maḥmūd b. 'Abdallāh Nishāpūrī.<sup>93</sup> The purpose of the *Tārīkh-i Turkmāniyya*, Nishāpūrī tells us, is to express his gratitude to the Qutbshahi dynasty by recording the "affairs, amazing circumstances, terrible wars, fighting and banqueting (*bazm u razm*) and the other deeds and virtues of its great noble ancestors which occurred in Iran and India by divine decree"<sup>94</sup> – for, he says, renown is the only thing that is lasting, and other dynasties have been immortalised by their chroniclers, such as the Timurids through the *Zafarnāma*. In fact, though, Nishāpūrī's task was also to commemorate the devotion to Shi'ism of the Qutbshahis' ancestors and their role in spreading Islam. Again, the Qutbshahis are explicitly compared with the Safavids as one of two dynasties that supports the Ithna Ash'ari faith, which they had done even before the

92 Ibid., fol. 14a.

93 Ibid., fol. 6b. Minorsky, misled perhaps by the poor text that we have, misinterprets this name. The text reads that it was written by "ḍa'if 'ibād allāh al-wadūd ibn 'Abdallāh Maḥmūd Nishāpūrī". Clearly the copyist's mistake is to write *ḍa'if* in place of *aḍ'af*, rendering the phrase "the weakest of God's loving servants"; Minorsky, however, ignores the *alif* in *'ibād* and renders it as 'Abdallāh al-wadūd b. 'Abdallāh Maḥmūd Nishāpūrī, which makes little sense.

94 Nishāpūrī, *Tārīkh-i Turkmāniyya*, MS 10 Islamic 2033, fols 9a-b.

emergence of the Safavids, while the vicissitudes that their Qaraqoyunlu ancestors faced in fighting the Sunni Timurids and other sultans resemble Shah ‘Abbās’s battles with the Uzbeks.<sup>95</sup>

Religion, then, looms large in the author’s purpose, even if ostensibly much of the text is devoted to accounts of battles. Nishāpūrī starts with a detailed account of the first person to convert to Islam from this family, which was Oghuz Khan; wrongly attributing the story to Juvaynī’s *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā* rather than the *Jāmi’ al-Tavārīkh* of Rashīd al-Dīn,<sup>96</sup> Nishāpūrī tells of how the infant Oghuz Khan converted to Islam, rejecting his infidel parents, but eventually achieving the conversion of all of his people.<sup>97</sup> Oghuz Khan is said to be the sixth-generation ancestor of Qarā-Yūsuf. It was, however, with the emergence of Chinggis Khan (dated to 599/1202-3)<sup>98</sup> that the Qaraqoyunlu emerged; they were tribes loyal to the Khwarazmshah, who on his defeat fled to Diyarbekir and Erzurum, where “in accordance with the praiseworthy custom of their glorious fathers and forefathers, they devoted themselves to holy war (*ghazā va jihād*) against the Tatar, Georgian, Mongol and the infidel”.<sup>99</sup>

It is with the accession of the Jalayirid sultan Shaykh Uways that Nishāpūrī begins to provide some real detail, albeit from a perspective firmly skewed towards the Qaraqoyunlu side. In Nishāpūrī’s account, Shaykh Uways, having newly ascended the throne, sends to Qarā-Muḥammad and his uncle Bayrām-Khvāja seeking their help against his enemies. Their first joint victory is the defeat of the rebel governor of Baghdad, Khvāja Mirjān, which is described at some length.<sup>100</sup> The involvement of the Qaraqoyunlu in this does not seem to be confirmed by other sources.<sup>101</sup> The next chapter, however, concerns the falling-out (for reasons vaguely described as “corruption and stubbornness”, *fasād u ‘inād*) between Qarā-Muḥammad and Shaykh Uways. Nishāpūrī’s account of

95 Ibid., fols 15b-16a, 228b.

96 For the story, see Rashīd al-Dīn Faẓlallāh Hamadānī, *Jāmi’ al-Tavārīkh (Tārīkh-i Ughūz)*, ed. Muḥammad Rawshan (Tehran: Mīrāth-i Maktūb, 1384), 1-7; for a discussion, see Evrim Binbaş, “Oğuz Khān Narratives,” *Encyclopaedia Iranica* (London and Costa Mesa, CA: Encyclopaedia Iranica Foundation, 1982-).

97 Nishāpūrī, *Tārīkh-i Turkmāniyya*, MS 10 Islamic 2033, fols 17a-20b.

98 Few other dates are mentioned, and when they are, they do not always agree with those given elsewhere. For example, the *Tārīkh-i Turkmāniyya* (fol. 23a), gives AH 759 for the death of Shaykh Hasan Noyan (which differs from other sources, which give it as 757/1356 – see Wing, *Jalayirids*, 101-2).

99 Nishāpūrī, *Tārīkh-i Turkmāniyya*, MS. 10 Islamic 2033, fol. 21b.

100 Ibid., fols 24a-27b.

101 E.g. Zayn al-Dīn b. Ḥamdallāh Mustawfī Qazvīnī, *Dhayl-i Tārīkh-i Guzīda*, ed. Īraj Afshar (Tehran: Hay’at-i Bar-rasī va Gunish-i Kitāb, 1372), 76-8; Hāfīz-i Abrū, *Dhayl-i Jāmi’ al-Tavārīkh-i Rashīdī*, ed. Khānbābā Bayānī (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Dānishgāh-i Tīhrān, 1350), 240-1; also on the revolt, see Wing, *Jalayirids*, 108-10.

Shaykh Uways's campaign as far west as Muş to discipline the Qaraqoyunlu is a little more detailed than in our main primary sources, Zayn al-Dīn Qazvīnī and Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū, who inform us that the campaign took place in 1366.<sup>102</sup> Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū's account is derived from Zayn al-Dīn Qazvīnī's, but is so close that it is not possible to tell for sure which was used by Nishāpūrī. The last-named differs mainly from his sources in that while in Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū and Qazvīnī the campaign was directed against Bayrām-Khvāja, in Nishāpūrī's version Bayrām-Khvāja merely features alongside "the great amir" Qarā-Muḥammad, and Nishāpūrī emphasises that Uways had broken his agreement (*'ahd*) by waging war on the Qaraqoyunlu. The appearance of almost identical phrases in Qazvīnī/Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū and Nishāpūrī confirm that the former must be the latter's source:<sup>103</sup>

Qazvīnī/Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū:

سلطان از راه چبچخور و غار اصحاب کھف روانه شد و دو نوبت از آب  
فرا ت عبور کرد و به صحرای موش آمد و با پیرام خواجه ترکمان جنگ کرد و  
پیرام خواجه بهزیمت رفت

Nishāpūrī (fol. 28a):

سپاه سلطان اویس که فزون از قطرات امطار و ریگ بوادی و صحاری بود  
از راه اصحاب کھف روان شد و دو نوبت از آب فرا ت عبور نموده بصحرای  
موش آمدند و امیر کبیر و پیرام خواجه دست اعتصام بلطف ایزدی زده  
چون سلطان بخلاف عهد و پیمان قصد ایشان نموده بود

Nonetheless, the outcome of the battle is recorded very differently. In Qazvīnī/Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū, Bayrām is defeated, Uways raids his encampment and his people, and stays in the region for one week before returning to Tabriz. However, in Nishāpūrī, who devotes a page to describing the battle as opposed to a single

102 Nishāpūrī, *Tārīkh-i Turkmāniyya*, MS 10 Islamic 2033, fols 27a-29a; Wing, *Jalayirids*, 110-11; Qazvīnī, *Dhayl*, 79-80; Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū, *Dhayl*, 242.

103 It is worth noting that the phrasing in the famous works of Mīrkhvānd and Khvādamīr is quite different, confirming that Nishāpūrī resorted directly to the earlier sources rather than getting the information from an intermediary source. Cf. Mīrkhvānd, *Tārīkh-i Rawzat al-Şafā*, ed. Jamshīd Kayān-farr (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Asāṭir, 1380), Vol. VIII, 4461-2; Khvādamīr, *Ḥabīb al-Siyar*, ed. Jalāl al-Dīn Humāī (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Khayyām, 1380), Vol. IV, 243.

phrase in his source, the result of the fighting was inconclusive and both parties agreed on peace. As part of the terms of this, Uways bestowed Mosul, Sinjar, Mayyafariqin and Jirijis (i.e. Erciş) on Qarā-Muḥammad, while the Qaraqoyunlu agreed to act as guarantors of the safety of Uways's realm.<sup>104</sup> The next chapter in Nishāpūrī moves forward some ten years (as we know from our earlier sources, Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū and Qazvīnī, Nishāpūrī being conspicuously silent about dates), to discuss the Jalayirid campaign against the Qaraqoyunlu in 1376, in which Qarā-Muḥammad again plays a central role. Another change made (presumably by Nishāpūrī) is that whereas in historical fact this campaign was conducted by Sultan Ḥusayn Jalayir, in the *Tārīkh-i Turkmāniyya* the protagonist is Uways.<sup>105</sup> Doubtless, the reason is to associate the Qaraqoyunlu with the most famous and prestigious member of the Jalayirid dynasty.<sup>106</sup>

A full analysis of the *Tārīkh-i Turkmāniyya's* treatment of Qaraqoyunlu history cannot be undertaken here; it deserves further comparison with the fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Iranian chronicles to assess more fully its value as a source for Qaraqoyunlu history. Yet superficially it appears to represent an elaboration (both stylistically and in some matters of detail) on Qazvīnī and Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū, from which it is in all likelihood derived. However, extraneous details are omitted to concentrate on the careers of Qarā-Muḥammad and Qarā-Yūsuf and their battles against the Jalayirids. It is for this reason, no doubt, that Nishāpūrī fails to mention dates. By leaving these out, even though they are well attested in the fourteenth-century sources, Nishāpūrī is able to telescope rather distant events together to formulate a coherent Qaraqoyunlu-centred narrative, commemorating the heroic deeds and *ghazā* of Qarā-Muḥammad and Qarā-Yūsuf. Meanwhile Bayrām-Khvāja, as an indirect ancestor to the dynasty, has his role played down and subordinated to that of Qarā-Muḥammad. The suspicion thus arises that rather than representing a primary source for fifteenth-century Qaraqoyunlu history, as it was used by Sümer, it represents another manifestation of the same trend that we have noted in the *Nasabnāma* texts – namely, the desire to connect the *ghāzī* activities of the Qutbshahis with the Qaraqoyunlu's battles against the infidel, and to emphasise the significance of the direct ancestors of the Qutbshahis to the exclusion or marginalisation of other members of the Qaraqoyunlu ruling family who may historically have been equally or more important. The complete omission of Jahānshāh and Iskandar may reflect the sensitivity of this topic, which Nishāpūrī sought to address in the *Tārīkh-i Sultān-Muḥammad*.

104 Nishāpūrī, *Tārīkh-i Turkmāniyya*, MS 10 Islamic 2033, fols 28b-29a.

105 Ibid., fols 29b-33b; Wing, *Jalayirids*, 155; Qazvīnī, *Dhayl*, 94; Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū, *Dhayl*, 251.

106 On him, see Wing, *Jalayirids*, 129-46.



## 6 The *Tārīkh-i Sulṭān-Muḥammad Quṭbshāhī*

Sometimes known as the *Tārīkh-i Quṭbshāhī*, this is by far the best known of the Qutbshahi histories, having been partially incorporated into John Briggs's translation of *Firishta*.<sup>107</sup> It is also the only one to date to have been published, albeit in a rather poorly distributed edition that is essentially a transcription of a manuscript in the Andhra Pradesh State Archives.<sup>108</sup> It exists in at least seventeen manuscripts and was consulted by later authors such as the person who wrote the well-known late-Safavid composition, the *Jāmi'-i Mufidī*.<sup>109</sup> Despite its title, the *Tārīkh-i Sulṭān-Muḥammad* in fact presents a survey of Qutbshahi history from their Qaraqoyunlu origins down to the fifth year of the reign of Sulṭān-Muḥammad, 1617. The introductory chapter, comprising some thirty printed pages<sup>110</sup> discussing the Qutbshahis' Qaraqoyunlu heritage, has been published in abridged English translation by Minorsky.<sup>111</sup>

No author is mentioned, but we are told that the history was composed at the request of Sulṭān-Muḥammad to abridge a work on his ancestors that had previously been written by "one of the servants of this court" but which was too long-winded (*ba'qī taṭwīl dāsh*).<sup>112</sup> However, the initial sections are clearly derived from Nīshāpūrī's *Tārīkh-i Turkmāniyya*, as becomes clear from comparing the account of the Qaraqoyunlu ancestor Töre Beg's relations with the Mongols:

*Tārīkh-i Turkmāniyya* (fol. 22b):

امیر نامدار با حشم و ایل و الوس از آب آمویہ عبور نموده در صحاری و بوادی  
دیاری بکر و ارض روم رحل اقامت انداخته مرکز اعلام اسلام ساخت بموجب

<sup>107</sup> John Briggs (trans.), *History of the Rise of Mahomedan Power in India till the Year AD 1612, translated from the original Persian of Mahomed Kasim Ferishta* (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel, 2004; 1st edn 1829), 608ff.

<sup>108</sup> *Tārīkh-i-Sultan Muhammad Qutb Shah*, ed. Zareena Parveen (New Delhi/Delhi: National Mission for Manuscripts and Dilli Kitab Ghar, 2015).

<sup>109</sup> The relationship between these two works is discussed at length in Mancini-Lander, "Tales Bent Backward"; to the sixteen manuscripts listed by Mancini-Lander (*ibid.*, 51) should be added the one in the Andhra Pradesh State Archives used by Parveen. It seems highly likely there are more copies to be discovered in Indian collections, and indeed three further mss from the Asafiyya collection (now Telengana Government Oriental Manuscripts Library) are listed by Storey, *Persian Literature*, 747. In addition to the transcription by Parveen, I have based these remarks on MS British Library, MS 10 Islamic 179.

<sup>110</sup> *Tārīkh-i-Sultan Muhammad*, ed. Parveen, 9-41; London 10 Islamic 179, fols 3a-29a.

<sup>111</sup> Minorsky, "The Qara-qoyunlu and the Qutb-shāhs."

<sup>112</sup> *Tārīkh-i-Sultan Muhammad*, ed. Parveen, 8; London 10 Islamic 179, fol. 2b.

عادت پسندیده ابا و اجداد امجاد خویش بغزا و جهاد کفار تاتار و کرج و  
مغول و غیرهم مشغول گردیده ساعی جمیله در اعلام اسلام بظهور رسانید و  
اصلا و قطعا ربقه اطاعت جنگیز خان و ابا قاجان و گیخاتو [نمود]

*Tārīkh-i Sulṭān-Muḥammad* (ed. Parveen, p. 10):

میر توره بیگ با ایل و الوس از آب آمویه عبور نموده در صحاری بوادی  
دیار بکر و ارض روم توطن اختیار نمود بغزای کفار کرج و تاتار مشغول  
گردید اصلا اطاعت جنگیز خان و اولادش نه نمود

Evidently, the *Tārīkh-i Sulṭān-Muḥammad* represents an abridgement of these parts of the *Tārīkh-i Turkmāniyya*. Elsewhere, the *Tārīkh-i Sulṭān-Muḥammad* refers to the *Tārīkh-i Maḥmūdshāhī*,<sup>113</sup> this seems likely to be a reference to Nīshāpūrī's *Ma'āsir*, also known under the title *Tavārīkh-i Quṭbshāhī-yi Maḥmūdī*.<sup>114</sup> Given that neither the *Ma'āsir* nor the *Tārīkh-i Turkmāniyya* circulated widely – surviving in unique manuscripts and seeming to be unfinished, and, like the *Tārīkh-i Sulṭān-Muḥammad*, being written for Sulṭān-Muḥammad – it seems very probable that their author is one and the same, Maḥmūd b. 'Abdallāh Nīshāpūrī, as Minorsky hinted but did not expressly articulate, and as Charles Storey suggested.<sup>115</sup> The works are written in a similar style, the ornate and verbose prose popular in early modern Iran and India mixed with passages of simplicity and lucidity. The evident borrowings from the *Tārīkh-i Turkmāniyya* and the *Ma'āsir* suggest that both works must have existed in some form before 1617, the date of composition, although it is evident, as discussed above, that the surviving manuscript of the *Ma'āsir* represents a later abridgement.

As with other Qutbshahi histories, the theme of *bazm u razm* (“fighting and feasting”) dominates the *Tārīkh-i Sulṭān-Muḥammad*, although the book concludes on a more peaceful note with selections from Sulṭān-Muḥammad's Persian verses. The treatment of Qaraqoyunlu history differs from the earlier texts in that it includes far more dates and more apparently factual detail about the deeds of various members of the family, such as Pīr Budāq and Jahānshāh and their battles. It is likely that it, at least in part, drew on Khūrshāh's *Tārīkh-i Īlchī*; although the text is clearly distinct, many of the same elements appear – such

113 *Tārīkh-i Sulṭān Muhammad*, ed. Parveen, 52; MS 10 Islamic 179, fol. 37a.

114 See Nīshāpūrī, *Ma'āsir*, MS 10 Islamic 841, fol. 1a.

115 Storey, *Persian Literature*, 747.

as the tale of Temür's bequest of his ring, in this case to Pīr Budāq, signifying the latter's right to rule.<sup>116</sup> Other sources used by the author of the *Tārīkh-i Sulṭān-Muḥammad* include 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Samarqandī's *Matla'-i Sa'dayn*.<sup>117</sup> However, it also seems to reproduce the oral testimony of Sulṭān-Qulī concerning his migration to India, as recorded in the lost *Marghūb al-Qulūb*.<sup>118</sup>

The *Tārīkh-i Sulṭān-Muḥammad* presents a new approach to the question of Qaraqoyunlu succession, avoiding denigrating Jahānshāh while acknowledging Iskandar's rule. The principal difference, however, is that it recognises the existence of Jahānshāh's son Ḥasan-'Alī and Yūsuf who ruled briefly and ingloriously after Jahānshāh's death, neither of whom are mentioned in any of the other Qutbshahi sources apart from Khūrshāh, and thus the line of Iskandar is not depicted as the sole legitimate succession as it is in the *Nasabnāma*. Instead, the problem of legitimate succession is solved in a rather more complex fashion: Yūsuf b. Jahānshāh's daughter Khadīja Begam is said to have married her first cousin once removed, Pīr-Qulī b. Alvand b. Iskandar, from whom Uways-Qulī and the Qutbshahis were descended. In other words, rather than stressing the superiority of Iskandar and the legitimate claim of his line, the *Tārīkh-i Sulṭān-Muḥammad* makes the Qutbshahis the descendants of both Iskandar and Jahānshāh. A further innovation in this chronicle is making Shāh Ni'matallāh himself a relative of the Qaraqoyunlu through his marriage to a female descendant of Jahānshāh.

Moreover, the Aqqoyunlu Ya'qūb appears for the first time in the *Tārīkh-i Sulṭān-Muḥammad* as the major antagonist of the Qaraqoyunlu who impelled Sulṭān-Qulī's flight to India, although this had been alluded to more briefly in the *Ma'āsir*. Indeed, Uzun Ḥasan, who in earlier works had appeared as the great enemy of the dynasty, is given a much more positive depiction in the *Tārīkh-i Sulṭān-Muḥammad*. The author tells us specifically that Uzun Ḥasan left Pīr-Qulī alone after Jahānshāh's defeat, and it was his son Ya'qūb who instituted a new policy of persecuting the Qaraqoyunlu descendants.<sup>119</sup> This was because despite the Qaraqoyunlu's loyalty to him, Ya'qūb feared them and he summoned experts in the occult who were specialised in geomancy and astrology to foretell any potential threat they posed. The occultists' prediction is rendered in verse:

116 *Tārīkh-i Sultan Muhammad*, ed. Parveen, 16.

117 Mentioned explicitly in *ibid.*

118 *Ibid.*, 43, 45-6; London 10 Islamic 179, fol. 30b; cf. Minorsky, "The Qara-qoyunlu and the Qutb-shāhs," 71.

119 MS 10 Islamic 179, fols 29b-30a.

که گردد یکی شه مالک رقاب ☆ نهد بر درش سرمه و آفتاب  
 از آفاق کشور گشای کند ☆ جان در جهان پادشاهی کند  
 ولیکن نباشد بملک عراق ☆ بهندوستان افتاد این اتفاق

There will come a king, a lord of men, night and day will rise on his gate  
 He will conquer to the ends of the earth, and make an empire of the  
 world

But this will not happen in the kingdom of Iraq, this fortune will befall  
 him in India.<sup>120</sup>

Despite the reassurance that this future greatness would occur in India, Ya'qūb decides to extirpate the Qaraqoyunlu, forcing Sulṭān-Qulī to flee.

The treatment of key issues such as the role of Jahānshāh and Ya'qūb marks a clear break with earlier models, such as the *Nasabnāmas*. It is possible, of course, that the text merely follows the lost *Marghūb al-Qulūb* in its treatment of the key issues of Jahānshāh and Ya'qūb, but on the other hand it seems unlikely that Fursī would have exalted Iskandar's line in the way that he does if this genealogy had already been accepted in the reign of Muḥammad-Qulī. The treatment in the *Tārīkh-i Sulṭān-Muḥammad* thus suggests that the genealogy of the Qutbshahis remained a live issue in the early seventeenth century, and that Nishāpūrī's works sought to rehabilitate Jahānshāh and integrate him into the Qutbshahi genealogy while seeking to develop a new account of the circumstances of Sulṭān-Qulī's flight. I will reflect further on the possible reasons for this in the conclusion to this chapter.

## 7 The Qaraqoyunlu Dynastic Myth in Other Sources

The sources discussed above are by far the most detailed treatments of the Qutbshahis' Qaraqoyunlu dynastic myth to come down to us. One other Qutbshahi history, the *Ḥadīqat al-Salāṭīn* of Niẓām al-Dīn Aḥmad b. 'Abdallāh Sa'īdī Shīrāzī, composed c. 1643, also makes brief reference to it. Shīrāzī's aim, though, is to show how the *nūr-i Muḥammadi*, the pre-cosmic soul of Muḥammad, was transmitted from Adam to the current Qutbshahis.<sup>121</sup> The passage is of interest

120 Ibid., fol. 30a; see also Mancini-Lander, "Tales Bent Backwards," 34-5, with a freer translation of these verses.

121 Niẓām al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn 'Abdallāh Sa'īdī Shīrāzī, *Ḥadīqat al-Salāṭīn-i Qutbshāhī*, ed. Sayyid 'Ali Asghar Bilgrami (Hyderabad, India: Idarah-i Adabiyat-i Urdu. 1961), 5.

for suggesting the shifting role that the Qaraqoyunlu past played in dynastic legitimacy (as least as reflected in historical works). The *nūr-i Muḥammadī* is a concept in both Shi'ism and Sufism, and its employment by Shīrāzī suggests a desire to portray the Qutbshahi ruler as the “perfect man” in Ibn ‘Arabī’s terminology (*al-insān al-kāmil*) or a ruler endowed with prophetic powers. The Qaraqoyunlu are briefly brought into play as a way of linking the Qutbshahis with previous generations of prophets through their ancestor Oghuz, the descendant of Japheth and ultimately Noah, Adam’s descendant.<sup>122</sup>

The story of the Qutbshahis’ origins was also known to the famous early seventeenth-century Deccani chronicler Firishta, who wrote his *Gulshan-i Ibrāhīmī* at the court of the Adilshahis. As we might expect, Firishta devotes much space to explaining the Adilshahis’ descent from a runaway prince, Yūsuf, who “was a son of the great sultans of Rum, who are famous as the Ottoman dynasty”.<sup>123</sup> Yūsuf is claimed to have been none other than a son of Sultan Murad II and a brother to Mehmed the Conqueror, who sought to execute him as a potential rival. Saved by his mother from the executioner, Yusuf fled to India where he founded the Adilshahi dynasty in a story that is strongly reminiscent of the Qutbshahis’ memory of Sulṭān-Qulī’s own flight, as Derek Mancini-Lander has rightly observed.<sup>124</sup> Firishta does his best to play down any such parallels. His sole remarks on the origin of Qutbshahis are as follows:

Sulṭān-Qulī was one of the Baharlū Turks, from the people (*qawm*) of Mir ‘Alī Shakar, and one of those affiliated to that house. It is claimed that Sulṭān-Qulī was a descendant of the late Shāh Jahān [i.e. Jahānshāh] who was killed, but the first account is closer to the truth. By all reckonings his birthplace and [the] place where he was raised was Hamadan, and at the end of the period of Sultan Muḥammad Lashkarī, he came to the Deccan from that region in the prime of his youth. As [the sultan] valued and honoured Turkish *ghulāms*, he was admitted into their ranks.<sup>125</sup>

122 A similar claim was made in the *Tārīkh-i Quṭbshāhī* (cf. Minorsky, “The Qaraqoyunlu and the Qutbshahs,” 53) and also by the family of Bayram Khan; see Naik, *‘Abdu’r-Raḥīm Khān-i Khānān*, 4-5.

123 Muḥammad Qāsim Hindūshāh Astarābādī [Firishta], *Tārīkh-i Firishta*, ed. Muḥammad Riḍā Naṣīrī (Tehran: Anjuman-i Āthār u Mafākhir-i Farhangī, 1393), Vol. 111, 1; this tale is analysed in Fischel, “Origin Narratives,” 74-6.

124 Mancini-Lander, “Tales Bent Backwards”; see also Fischel, “Origin Narratives,” 78.

125 Astarābādī, *Tārīkh-i Firishta*, Vol. 111, 514-15; Briggs, *History of the Rise of Mahomedan Power*, 601.

Despite its brevity, this passage suggests that Firishta was acquainted with the new version of Qutbshahi dynastic origins being purveyed by Nīshāpūrī that created the possibility of Qutbshahi claims to descent from Jahānshāh, which had been categorically rejected by earlier authors. Hamadan refers to the story of Qutbshahi origins at Sa'dabad, just outside Hamadan, reflected in Fursī and all later writers. Furthermore, the Mir 'Alī Shakar to whom Firishta refers also appears in the *Tārīkh-i Sulṭān-Muḥammad*,<sup>126</sup> but as Jahānshāh's senior amir, the *amīr al-umarā'* and *rukn al-dawla* – the latter title possibly meaning chief minister, although its significance in this period is unclear.<sup>127</sup> He later became the effective ruler (*muṭlaq-i 'inān*) of the Qaraqoyunlu state under Yūsuf b. Jahānshāh in 1468.<sup>128</sup> Thus, Firishta's account, evidently designed to denigrate the rival dynasty's claims to royal origins, in fact essentially draws on the Qutbshahis' own historiographical tradition with the personalities rearranged to demote the prestige of the dynastic ancestor. It is also worth noting that the reference to the Baharlū tribe, which is not evident in the main Qutbshahi tradition, may reflect stories about the Mughal nobleman Bayrām Khān who claimed descent from this clan. The question then arises of Firishta's source. Sherwani believed that Firishta completed the *Gulshan-i Ibrāhīmī* in 1606, updating it in 1609; this would clearly rule out the use of the *Tārīkh-i Sulṭān-Muḥammad* as a source, as this was composed in 1616.<sup>129</sup> However, others have suggested that Firishta may have lived until 1623.<sup>130</sup> He may thus have been aware of some of the contents of Nīshāpūrī's other works such as the *Ma'āṣir*, which was evidently circulating in a rather different form in the early seventeenth century.

Even after the fall of the dynasty, authors in Hyderabad continued to discuss the Qutbshahis' Turkish origins. One example is the *Ḥadīqat al-Ālam* by Mīr Abū Turāb b. Sayyid Aḥmad al-Rāzavī, written for the ruler of Hyderabad, Nizām al-Dawla Nizām al-Mulk Mīr Akbar 'Alīkhān Bahādūr Āṣaf Jāh (r. 1762-1803), at the request of his chief minister Mīr 'Ālam because of the ruler's interest in the history and biographies (*kutub-i tavārīkh u siyar*) of past sultans and their battles.<sup>131</sup> His main sources are Firishta and the *Tārīkh-i Sulṭān-Muḥammad*, and

126 Minorsky, "The Qara-qoyunlu and the Qutb-shāhs," 69.

127 Ibid., 69, n. 4.

128 Ibid., 69.

129 Sherwani, *History of the Qutb Shāhī Dynasty*, 683, 685.

130 Gavin R.G. Hambly, "Ferešta, Tārīkh-e," *Encyclopaedia Iranica* (London and Costa Mesa, CA: Encyclopaedia Iranica Foundation, 1982-).

131 British Library, MS 10 Islamic 2428. On Mīr 'Ālam, see William Dalrymple, *White Mughals: Love and Betrayal in Eighteenth Century India* (London: Harper Collins, 2002), index, s.v. Mīr 'Ālam; Storey, *Persian Literature*, 750-1.

it is testimony to Firishta's influence that his rather anti-Qutbshahi story even found a place in the history of a new dynasty of Hyderabad that positioned themselves as the Qutbshahis' successors.

## 8 Conclusion

Whether what we might call the Qutbshahis' "Qaraqoyunlu dynastic myth" was literally true or invented is, in a sense, beside the point. It was certainly taken extremely seriously by the Qutbshahis themselves; for example, Sulṭān-Muḥammad wrote his genealogy, tracing his descent via Iskandar to Qarā-Muḥammad, on a manuscript now preserved in the Salar Jung Library in Hyderabad (see Figure 6.3).<sup>132</sup>

Interest in the story of the dynastic ancestors may also have given rise to the composition or copying of other works in the Deccan, beyond historiography. A note in Sulṭān-Muḥammad's hand on a collection of Sufi poems by Jamālī noted that the author "lived in the time of the sultans of the high station of the race of the Turks of Qaraqoyunlu", suggesting that the appeal of the text was partly derived from its Qaraqoyunlu origin (see Figure 6.4).<sup>133</sup>

Even more striking is the horoscope of the Aqqoyunlu sultan Ya'qūb, entitled the *Zā'icha-i Tāli'* by 'Abd Ja'far Ja'farī Tabrīzī, a massive work of 149 folios that was copied in the Deccan, probably in the sixteenth century, while probably somewhat later a picture of both the astrologer and sultan Ya'qūb were added as a frontispiece (see Figure 6.5). While an elaborate horoscope of an Aqqoyunlu might have had more obvious appeal in the Adilshahi capital of Bijapur,<sup>134</sup> given the relevance of Ya'qūb and his astrological interests to the

<sup>132</sup> Sherwani, *History of the Quṭb Shāhī Dynasty*, 16, 52, n. 2. The text is a dictionary, the *Kanz al-Lughat* (Salar Jung Library, MS Persian Lug. 113), but the information that Sherwani gives is contradictory. He states in one place that the writing is in the hand of the fourth sultan, and then that it is in the hand of the sixth (Sulṭān-Muḥammad), while the date he gives is Muḥarram 1045/June-July 1635. According to Sherwani, the genealogy reads: Muḥammad Quṭbshāh b. Mīrẓā Muḥammad Amīn b. (Ibrāhīm) Quṭbshāh b. Sulṭān-Qulī Quṭb al-Mulk b. Uways-Qulī b. Pīr-Qulī b. Alvand Beg b. Mīrẓā Sikandar [i.e. Iskandar] b. Yūsuf b. Qarā-Muḥammad Turkmān. However, if this is the case, the date of 1045/1635 must be wrong, for Sulṭān-Muḥammad had been dead for nearly a decade by that point. However, in truth the date is too heavily erased to be read although the month is certainly Dhū'l-Ḥijja. Judging by the similarity of style to the note in MS Persian Tasawwuf 158 (see note 133 below), we can be confident that the writer was indeed Sulṭān-Muḥammad.

<sup>133</sup> Cited from Sherwani, *History of the Quṭb Shāhī Dynasty*, 400, with spelling modified. The manuscript is Hyderabad, Salar Jung, MS Persian Tasawwuf 158.

<sup>134</sup> For the Adilshahis' claim to Aqqoyunlu descent, recorded by Rafī' al-Dīn Shīrāzī, see Fischel, "Origin Narratives," 78-9.



FIGURE 6.3 *Kanz al-Lughat*. Salar Jung Museum Library Hyderabad, MS Persian Lug. 113. Note showing Sulṭān-Muḥammad's genealogy



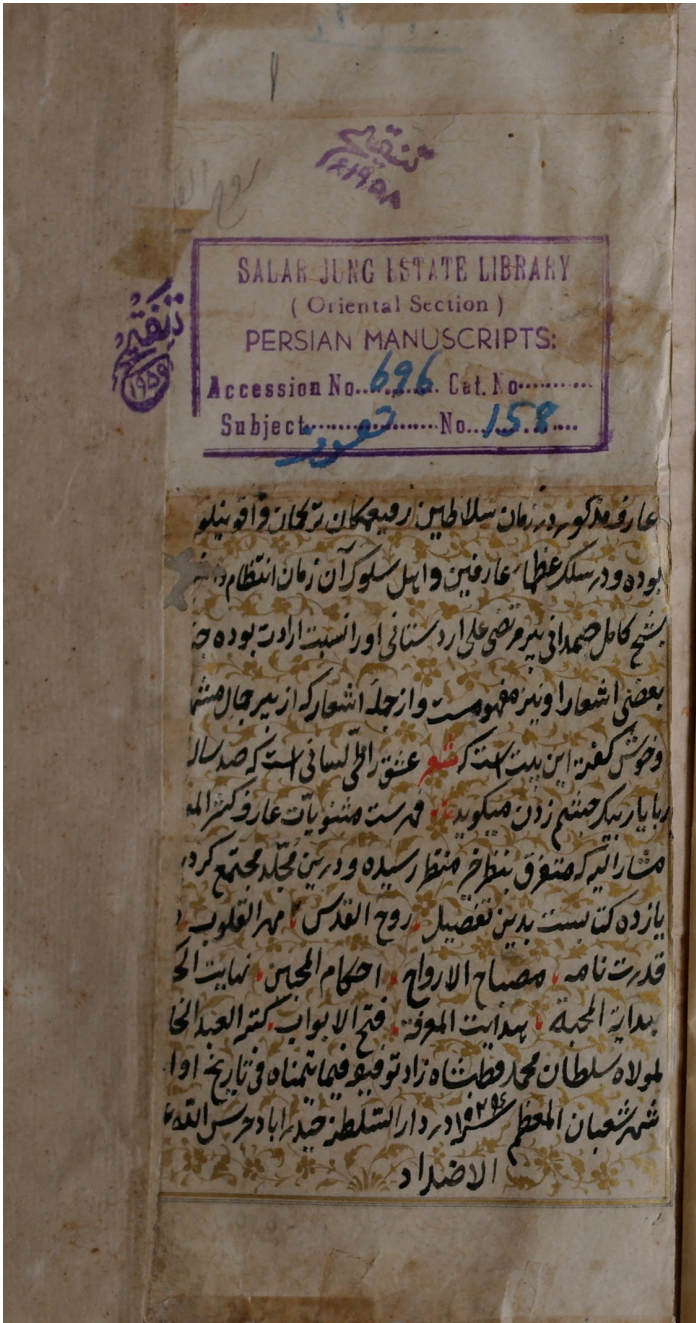


FIGURE 6.4 *Masnavi*s of Jamālī. Salar Jung Museum Library, Hyderabad, ms Persian Tasawwuf 158. Note in Sulṭān-Muḥammad’s hand underlining the poet’s Qaraqoyunlu connection



FIGURE 6.5 ‘Abd Ja’far Ja’fari Tabrizi, *Zā’icha-i Tāli*. Salar Jung Museum Library, Hyderabad, MS Persian U-S 28. Frontispiece illustrating the Aqqoyunlu sultan Ya’qūb (right) and the astrologer (left)

Qutbshahis’ Qaraqoyunlu dynastic myth and the tale of Sulṭān-Qulī’s migration, it is perhaps not coincidental that this magnificent and to date unstudied manuscript ended up in Hyderabad.<sup>135</sup>

Turkish ancestry, then, was not simply a legitimatory idiom employed by historians but was taken extremely seriously by the rulers themselves, influencing their literary tastes and their representation of their ancestry in private notes on their books, which can only have been intended for a very a limited audience. Nonetheless, however much the Qutbshahis were invested in the story of their ancestry (at least by the end of the sixteenth century), it remained a myth in the sense that it was a story that was subjected to constant elaboration and reinvention as it conveyed to contemporary readers meanings beyond its literal one. One of these meanings was doubtless, just as Fischel has argued

135 Hyderabad, Salar Jung Library MS Persian U-S 28. The manuscript has no date or place of copying, but its style and format are consistent with those of the sixteenth-seventeenth century Deccan.

of the Aqqoyunlu and Ottoman origins of the Adilshahis, to anchor the Qutbshahi dynasty in a broader Turko-Iranian Muslim world at a time when the Deccan sultanates were being increasingly threatened by the Mughals. In addition, the use of parallels between the Qaraqoyunlu battles against both unbelievers and Sunnis served to reinforce Qutbshahi claims to be continuing the legacy of their ancestors as a Shi'ite *mujāhid* state, and thus a worthy ally of the Safavids. Yet the histories produced for the Qutbshahi court suggest that the process of asserting such claims was far from being a simple and unproblematic legitimacy device, but rather that the details needed to be constantly reshaped. As we have seen, in the mid-sixteenth century, if the Qutbshahis did indeed assert a Qaraqoyunlu origin, it was apparently unknown to their court historian Khūrshāh. At the beginning of the reign of Muḥammad-Qulī, Fursī was advancing the Qutbshahis' claim to be the successors to the last legitimate Qaraqoyunlu ruler, Iskandar. Thirty years later, however, by the beginning of Sulṭān-Muḥammad's reign, in 1612, this strategy had evidently started to be toned down somewhat to accommodate a greater role for Jahānshāh, as we can see in the Hiralāl Khūshdil version of the *Nasabnāma*. This process was continued by Nīshāpūrī, who posited that the Qutbshahis were jointly descended from Iskandar and Jahānshāh, and who rammed home the point by making Shāh Nī'matallāh a descendant of Jahānshāh.

The various permutations to which the historians subjected the Qaraqoyunlu myth are themselves testimony to how seriously it was taken, even if in trying to explain why these changes were made we are reduced to speculation. It is clear that there is a shift around the time of Sulṭān-Muḥammad's accession, as both the Hiralāl Khūshdil *Nasabnāma* and Nīshāpūrī's works put a greater emphasis on the Shi'ite identity of the Qutbshahis and Qaraqoyunlus, most likely in response to Mughal encroachment in the northern Deccan. Yet why exactly at the same time a revision of the dynastic genealogy to accommodate Jahānshāh should have been thought necessary is less obvious. One possible reason may have been an increasing influence of immigrants from Iran, of whom Nīshāpūrī was one, who were acquainted with the Iranian historiographical tradition and may have suggested the advantages to the Qutbshahis of associating themselves with the greatest of the Qaraqoyunlu sultans, despite his apparently negative memory in Qutbshahi tradition. More directly related to contemporary politics, perhaps, was the swapping of Uzun Ḥasan for Ya'qūb as the bogeyman of Qaraqoyunlu history. Uzun Ḥasan, after all, had forged a marriage alliance with the Safavids, marrying his daughter to Junayd, the grandfather of Shah Ismā'īl, the founder of the Safavid state. On the other hand, the collapse of relations between Ya'qūb and Junayd's son Ḥaydar was a key factor in the outbreak of the Safavid revolt that ultimately overthrew

the Aqqoyunlu.<sup>136</sup> If the Qutbshahis were seeking a Safavid alliance, Ya'qūb made a much more suitable target for their historians' wrath. In this sense, the Qaraqoyunlu myth was not merely something to be employed in general terms as a vague legitimatory tale but rather had a direct political value as an assertion of the Qutbshahis' affiliation with the Safavids. The details, then, were potent, and needed to be brought into alignment with a version that implicitly emphasised the historic common interests and common enemies of both the Qaraqoyunlu and the Safavids. Despite the Indian provenance of the manuscripts described here, we are bound to wonder if the target audience was as much the Safavid court as patrons in Golconda.<sup>137</sup> The itinerant career of Nishāpūrī – who served both Safavid and Qutbshahi masters and who remained in close touch with the very latest developments in Safavid historiography, such as Iskandar Munshī's work – supports this interpretation. Another intriguing possibility suggested by the circulation of the *Nasabnāma* in North India is that a Mughal audience was intended to be influenced by the Qutbshahis' dynastic claims and their affinities with the Safavids. Further research on the circulation of these texts is required to fully elucidate their reception, but it is already clear that they reached beyond Golconda and the Qutbshahi court.

It is worth remarking on one final, more general characteristic of Qutbshahi historiography. None of the works considered here, with the possible exception of the *Tārīkh-i Sulṭān-Muḥammad*, has reached us in its final form. Khūrshāh's *Tārīkh-i Quṭbī* remained unfinished, lacking its crucial Qutbshahi section; Fursī's *Nasabnāma*, though apparently textually complete, never had its illustrations added; while the Hiralāl Khūshdil recension contains a text which has every appearance of being a rushed job, so botched that even the name of the dedicatee Muḥammad-Qulī was not updated after his demise and Sulṭān-Muḥammad's accession. As for Nishāpūrī's works, it is hard to imagine that the sudden change from Anatolia to India midway through the work was part of the author's original design of the *Tārīkh-i Turkmāniyya*, while the *Ma'āsir* was evidently subject to a process of rewriting extended from the reign of its original patron Muḥammad-Qulī until after the death of Sulṭān-Muḥammad – and even then, never seems to have been finished. Yet despite their manifest imperfections, these works circulated not just in rough copies but often in finely written, expensively illuminated manuscripts. It is well known, of course, that authors in the Islamic world often released their texts in multiple

136 Woods, *Aqqoyunlu*, 107, 142-3; Anooshahr, *Turkestan*, 76-8.

137 It is certainly the case that a number of relevant manuscripts are preserved in Iran too, suggesting that further research on Indian histories kept in Iranian manuscript libraries may be worthwhile. For example, in "Tales Bent Backwards", Manicini-Lander uses a manuscript of the *Tārīkh-i Sulṭān-Muḥammad* from the Malik Library Tehran, MS 3885.

versions for different audiences.<sup>138</sup> Nonetheless, with the Qutbshahis we have finely written manuscripts that contain texts which essentially seem to be at best draft copies, and this seems to apply to most of Qutbshahi historiographical production. Without further research, the reasons for this must remain elusive; however, it is perhaps testimony to the dynasty's keenness from the late sixteenth century onwards to circulate an authorised version of its history as it sought allies abroad, and also to counter the claims of its Adilshahi rivals with a prestigious genealogy of its own.

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<sup>138</sup> See, for example, the recent study of Khvādamīr by Philip Bockholt, *Weltgeschichtsschreibung zwischen Schia und Sunna. Ġiyās ad-Dīn Muhammad Ḥvādamīrs (ca. 1474-1535/36) Ḥabīb as-siyar fī aḥbār afrād al-bašar und sein Weg durchs Handschriftenzeitalter* (Leiden: Brill, 2020).

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PART 2  
*Art, Material Culture,  
Literature and Transregional  
Connections*





## Transregional Connections: The “Lion and Sun” Motif and Coinage between Anatolia and India

*Shailendra Bhandare*

The interlinkages between visual elements of material culture and interactions between people of different cultural groups has been a subject of keen interest and debate among historians of art, politics and the social sciences; anthropologists; and archaeologists. Designs and motifs travel with people, and are disseminated across a wide, sometimes very wide, geographical expanse. They develop multiple vocabularies and get assimilated in disparate cultures providing new meanings, interpretations and correspondences. Much like people, objects such as coins have a propensity to circulate – in the case of coins, due to their very nature being a medium of exchange and payment. In this chapter, I will focus on a famous motif, the “Lion and Sun”, on money in order to generate some discussion about how these interactions are mapped and what could have been the possible causal factors behind their transportation and adoption across a large tract of land, between Anatolia to the west and India to the east. I intend to “go backwards” in time, tracking the trajectory of the appearance of the motif – mainly on coins – with an emphasis on the numismatic history of the device in the Indo-Islamic World; I will cite hitherto unpublished numismatic evidence to argue for some of my views; and, lastly, I will bring more numismatic imagery and devices, particularly from India and Anatolia, within the ambit of the discussion generated from the study of the “Lion and Sun” motif. At the outset, I must confess that it is not my intention to draw conclusions; I would argue more for applying evidence, both new and old, to analytical tropes, and underlining ambiguities.

It is worthwhile to begin with a debate from the current discourse and to contextualise the analysis within its remit. Previous scholarship has approached numismatic visual evidence in two salient ways. One, discursive, trope considers coin imagery as a form of “propaganda”. To the scholars who subscribe to this view, depictions on coins are primarily a message, which embeds social, political and anthropological conceits. Most such scholars are disciplinarians of art history. On the other hand, numismatists tend to treat coins as “functional” objects and tend to suggest that whatever they depict is an

outcome of their function as money. As far as our analysis is concerned, Barry Flood and Luke Treadwell exemplify these two positions respectively.

In his path-breaking 2009 monograph *Objects of Translation*, Finbarr Barry Flood outlined a methodology wherein he adopted “linguistic models” to treat material culture that usually centres on “things”. Adapting heavily from postcolonial theory and anthropology, Flood illustrated how objects are designed or “composed”, consumed and commissioned in a world where “polyglot frontiers” facilitate a “multidirectional nature of exchange”. This particular cultural process, labelled “transculturation”, weighs heavily in his analysis, in which he brings forth one of the most fascinating aspects of “things” that populate such multi-lingual or multi-cultural spaces – that they speak different “visual languages”.<sup>1</sup> Flood’s analysis centres on many aspects of material culture, such as “coins, frescos, modes of dress, texts, manuscripts, monumental architecture and the more abstract but no less revealing realm of onomastics, royal titlature, and ritual practice”.<sup>2</sup> Providing hundreds of examples from such a wide range of ‘things’, Flood outlines how social processes like transculturation can be viewed through their study.

Although coins have featured generally in Flood’s analysis, he has primarily focused on those of the Habbarid amirs of Multan,<sup>3</sup> the Ghaznavids<sup>4</sup> and the Ghurids.<sup>5</sup> Along with the more typical numismatic phenomena, such as “type continuity”, Flood also discusses some other less common, and perhaps even unique, features like Sanskrit inscriptions on the coins of the Ghaznavid ruler Maḥmūd (r. 997-1030), which include not only pro-forma legends like the one outlining the date and the place of issue, but remarkably also a Sanskrit translation of the *shahāda*. From a typological viewpoint, he has drawn attention how some unusual type features, such as a stylized representation of Lakshmi the Hindu goddess of wealth and prosperity, were continued on the coins of the Ghurid ruler Mu‘izz al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Sām. Such occurrences are interesting to Flood because they highlight the “fault line between the rigidity of rhetoric and the fluidity of practice”,<sup>6</sup> which he views as a result of the fact that objects like these populated a particular juncture where a “polyglot vocabulary” embedded in them made their consumption and circulation easier. Flood therefore sees this continuity as an outcome of the “cultural value” car-

1 Finbarr Barry Flood, *Objects of Translation: Material Culture and Medieval “Hindu-Muslim” Encounter* (Princeton, NJ/Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2009), 8-9, 15-16.

2 *Ibid.*, 9-11.

3 *Ibid.*, 39.

4 *Ibid.*, 41.

5 *Ibid.*, 114-17.

6 *Ibid.*, 116.

ried by coins – which is related to, but also distinct from, their purchasing power and the role that they play as objects of economy. This, according to Flood, is not unique to the Ghaznavid/Ghurid periods in the subcontinent but had already been witnessed in the very early decades of Islam, when the Umayyad Caliphs, or their provincial governors, essentially carried on with coins designed in the same way as the preceding Byzantine and Sasanian dynasties whose territories they had inherited.<sup>7</sup> Along with continuities, Flood also highlights omissions which make coins, particularly the Ghurid ones, classic examples of how “transculturation” works. He emphasises, for example, how the inscriptions on the early Ghurid coins struck in India not only omitted the elaborate Islamic titlature that we encounter on Ghurid issues in their Afghan homeland but also omitted any reference to the Abbasid Caliph, who was a “figure difficult to accommodate in the normative framework of Indic kingship”.<sup>8</sup>

Flood’s observations pertain more closely to “notions of centre and periphery” and “diffusionism”, which presupposes that “culture diffuses from ‘high’ centres to the more culturally impoverished peripheries”. He attributes the interactions and interplay between visual aspects of Ghurid monuments and coins to “dynamic conditions in which signs and meanings were appropriated, translated, re-historicised and read anew”.<sup>9</sup> What results is a “cosmopolitan ecumene”, and Flood’s entire emphasis has been to underline that complex cultural processes facilitate this re-reading; that visual interconnections can be markers to study such cultural processes; and that “Manichaean taxonomies”, with their stark and essentialist divisions of labels, obliterate the importance of these cultural processes in our understanding of the past.

The view of numismatists has been somewhat contrarian. Instead of seeing the primacy of a grand scheme of cultural processes in such “hybrid” and/or syncretic, and therefore unusual, visual adaptations, numismatists have drawn attention to aspects that are more quotidian – which result in the same effect. As Islam spread out of Arabia into the immediately neighbouring regions of the Levant, Mesopotamia and further to Iran, vast areas which were monetised extensively and had had complex currency systems in operation for centuries came under Arab/Islamic control. Early Islamic coins in these regions, until the caliph ‘Abd al-Malik b. Marwān famously reformed the currency in the seventy-seventh year of the *hijra*, borrowed heavily from design vocabularies of the predecessor coinages. Stefan Heidemann has provided a “bird’s eye

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7 Ibid., 118.

8 Ibid., 116.

9 Ibid., 262.

view” of early Islamic coinage, and has identified the Byzantine and Sasanian coinages as apparatuses which early Islam used extensively to issue its first coins.<sup>10</sup> Much like the Ghurid or Ghaznavid “polyglottism” that Flood identifies, these early Islamic coins also continue, change, modify or innovate with respect to designs already familiar and in circulation. Omitting ostensibly Christian features, such as the *globus cruciger* in hands of the Byzantine emperor(s) on the *solidi*, or substituting Kufic Arabic inscriptions for mint signatures on the bronze *folles* were the most common modifications. Similarly, incorporating the name of Allah into marginal legends on the silver dirhams, the most extensive form of currency used in Sasanian Iran, was the major monetary modification in the newly Arab provinces of Fars and Seistan.

Numismatists have reservations about viewing a “grand anthropological scheme” of hybridity or polyglottism in such deviances, and also about how much such features can be taken as a justification for other aspects of material culture in a “compare-and-tell” sense. Treadwell has discussed a particularly interesting type – the “*miḥrāb* and ‘*anāza*” type – of early Islamic or Arab-Sasanian silver drachms in this respect.<sup>11</sup> Coins of this type were produced for a short while just before the reforms. On the obverse they depict a hybrid image of the caliph in garbs of the Sasanian emperor, and on the reverse a *miḥrāb*, or prayer niche, in which a spear is shown. George Miles, the first numismatist to discuss this type on the basis of a (then) unique coin in the collection of the American Numismatic Society, saw the occurrence of the reverse device as a deliberate “alternative to replace the distasteful Zoroastrian symbolism of the fire-altar”, which the predecessor Sasanian coinage had carried for over five centuries.<sup>12</sup> The spear inside the niche was identified by Miles as the Prophet’s short spear, or ‘*anaza*, with which he indicated the direction of prayer and also created an inviolable space around him while the prayer was conducted. Miles also contended that the niche that was depicted on the coin was the earliest dated representation of a *miḥrāb mujawwaf* or a “sunken *miḥrāb*”, which became a prominent feature of Islamic prayer architecture; in Miles’s

10 Stefan Heidemann, “The Merger of Two Currency Zones in Early Islam: The Byzantine and Sasanian Impact on the Circulation in Former Byzantine Syria and Northern Mesopotamia,” *Iran* 36 (1998), 95–112; and idem, “The Evolving Representation of the Early Islamic Empire and its Religion on Coin Imagery,” in Angelika Neuwirth, Nicolai Sinai and Michael Marx (eds), *The Quran in Context: Historical and Literary Investigations into the Quranic Milieu* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 149–56.

11 Luke Treadwell, “Mihrab and ‘Anaza’ or ‘Sacrum and Spear’? A Reconsideration of an Early Marwanid Silver Drachm,” *Muqarnas* 22 (2005), 1–28.

12 G.C. Miles, “Miḥrāb and ‘Anazah: A Study in Early Islamic Iconography,” in *Archaeologia orientalia in memoriam Ernst Herzfeld* (Locust Valley, NY: J.J. Augustin, 1952), 156–71.

view, the 2-D coin depiction showing a spear inside a niche was in fact a rendering of a 3-D architectural feature.

Treadwell describes in detail how Miles's contentions were endorsed by certain scholars, who not only submitted to Miles's claims but extended them further into other inferences. One scholar quoted by Treadwell suggested that this depiction indicated that its predecessor, the Zoroastrian fire-altar, had managed to survive on early Islamic coins because the early Muslims actually had made the fire-altar a part of their religious practice, and used it as an "orientation point" to indicate the direction of prayer.<sup>13</sup> The replacement of the altar with a symbolism that incorporated "purer" Islamic elements of the prayer ritual with respect to the same elements in it (the niche as a point of orientation, and the spear by which the Prophet indicated the direction) was therefore a logical modification of the design in order to Islamicise it. However, Treadwell also draws attention to other scholars who disagreed with Miles's identification of the device as a *mihrāb* in the first place. One early rejoinder to Miles's contention placed the design not in the context of comparative/interpretative analogies but within the coin-design traditions of the region in which it had originated. Here, therefore, we find the device identified not as a *mihrāb* but as the sacrum covering the Constantinian Cross, a potent Christian symbol, at Jerusalem. The spear on the coin replaced the cross and this, as endorsed by the inscription *Naṣr Allāh* which occurs next to the spear, suggested the "triumph of Muslim armies in the Holy Land and the spiritual and physical replacement of Christianity by the new religion of Islam".<sup>14</sup>

Discussing at length various interpretations of the "spear in niche" motif, Treadwell surmises that the design was an attempt at integrating "Persian and Syrian numismatic imagery in order to create a form" for the re-introduction of silver coinage in an area where it had been largely absent. The fact that it immediately precedes the reforms of 'Abd al-Malik, which heralded aniconic and entirely epigraphic coinage across the Islamic lands, is seen by Treadwell as signalling a terminus of a predecessor coinage tradition rather than a "new beginning". He therefore contends that given the complexity of the designs of the "spear in niche" type, "it is possible that seventh century Syrians were as confused by it as its modern observers have been"! But this coin type, as well as some other such "hybrid" types, does allow us "to observe the decision making process that accompanied the pursuit of a suitable numismatic iconography"

<sup>13</sup> Treadwell, "Mihrab and 'Anaza," 16-17.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 17-18.



because “the historical value of coinage lies in the provision of a datable sequence of choices, compromises and innovations in a single medium”.<sup>15</sup>

By highlighting the possibility of contemporary as well as an interpretative “confusion” in the reception of the imagery of innovative and/or hybridised coin designs, Treadwell emphasises the dilemma of what encodes the “visuality” of these designs. Does the multiplicity of messages, or “polyglottism”, contained within such images decide the primacy of their choice, or is it the case that relatively more mundane and practical matters, like functioning as an acceptable exchange medium in a newly conquered land, drive what “humble, mass-produced artefacts” like coins should bear on them? After all, Treadwell suggests that “the primary function of the numismatic image has been to guarantee to the coin user that the metal flan on which it is stamped holds a consistent value”.<sup>16</sup>

The debate about what functions numismatic imagery assumes when coins are struck with conspicuous devices is thus posited within these two viewpoints: the anthropological view of Flood and the numismatic view of Treadwell. In the following pages, we will see how the employment of the “Lion and Sun” image on coins struck between Anatolia and India, and their remarkable interconnections, helps us to revisit these viewpoints. To add more context to the discussion, I will also draw attention to parallels involving other numismatic devices.

## 1 The “Lion and Sun” Motif on Money

By far the most common modern occurrence of this motif was on Iranian money of the pre-Islamic Revolution period, on which it represented the national emblem of Iran. The coins – and, later, banknotes – of the Pahlavi and the Qajar dynasties depict a standing lion, holding a sword in his “hand” or front paw, with the sun rising above its back (see Figure 7.1). In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries particular religious and political messages were encoded in this emblem – firstly by the Qajars and then by their successors, the Pahlavis. Afsaneh Najmabadi has discussed the design history of the motif in detail. According to her, the Qajars projected the lion in an emblematic sense as a visual metaphor for the Shi‘i Imam ‘Alī because he was regarded as the “lion of God”.<sup>17</sup> ‘Alī’s victorious weapon of choice, the sword Zulfiqar, was placed in the lion’s

15 Ibid., 21.

16 Ibid., 3.

17 Afsaneh Najmabadi, *Women with Moustaches and Men without Beards: Gender and sexual anxieties of Iranian Modernity* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2005), 82-3.

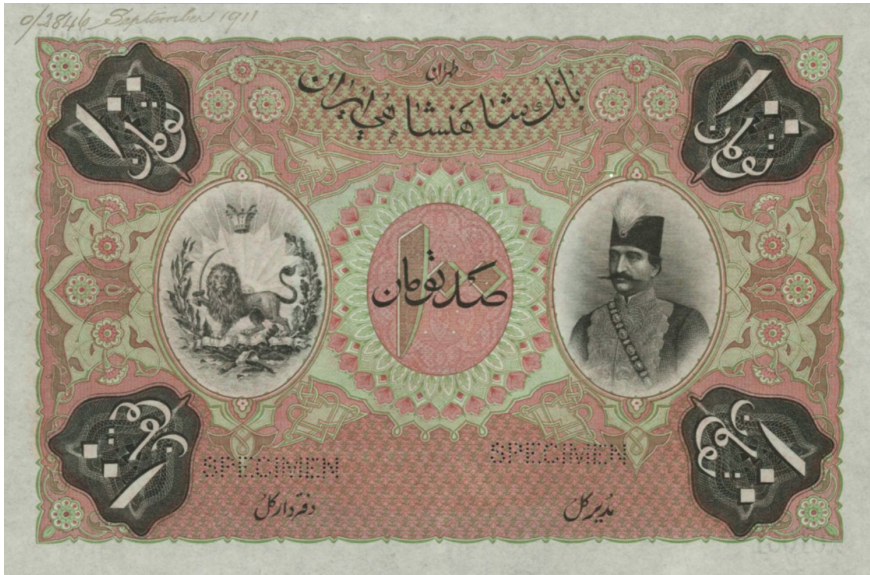


FIGURE 7.1 100-toman banknote of the Imperial Bank of Persia, with the “Lion and Sun” vignette, 1896

hand. But this was an early nineteenth-century modification, first made in the reign of Faṭḥ ‘Alī Qājār Shāh and later perpetuated in the state emblem of Iran. At the beginning of the Qajar period, we do not see the sword in the lion’s hand. Instead, the lion is depicted in rampant or seated posture. However, his association with ‘Alī the imam had very much been in the visual discourse ever since the end of the eighteenth century, as we see from a unique heavy gold coin in the Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford’s collection (see Figure 7.2), with the words *Yā ‘Alī* prominently emblazoned below the belly of the lion.

The motif remained largely absent from the Iranian coins of the Safavid period, mainly because of the fact that higher-value Safavid coinage was mainly inscriptional. However, a broad range of lower-value coins struck during the Safavid period were produced in various cities and towns, and feature pictorial depictions. These coins omit the name of the ruler, but often include AH dates and/or a regnal year. The “Lion and Sun” motif appears infrequently on such coins. Particularly worthy of mention are the “specially struck”, wide flan coins of the Isfahan mint, produced during the reign of Sulṭān-Ḥusayn (see Figure 7.3).

Afsaneh Najmabadi<sup>18</sup> and Shapur Shahbazi have both outlined different explanations for what the symbol stood for in Safavid Iran. Shahbazi suggests that the Safavid take on the symbol was a particularly “Iranian” interpretation

18 Ibid., 68-9.



FIGURE 7.2 Gold 20-abbasi coin of Āghā Muḥammad Khān Qājār, struck at Tehran, AH 1210 (Ashmolean Museum, HCR7414)



FIGURE 7.3 Safavid, temp. Sulṭān-Ḥusayn (r. 1694-1722), prestige civic copper bronze *fulus* (37mm, 17.44g), Isfahan mint, AH 1117 (Heritage World Coin Auctions, New York Signature Sale 302, Auction date: 6 January 2013, Lot number: 21764)

involving earlier cultural and historical trajectories.<sup>19</sup> The symbol had been associated with astronomical observations since very ancient times. The summer sun in the northern hemisphere is at its strongest between 20 July and 20 August when it is in the zodiacal sign of Leo, which is his “house” or “domicile”.

<sup>19</sup> A. Shapur Shahbazi, “Flags. i. Of Persia,” *Encyclopaedia Iranica* (London and Costa Mesa, CA: Encyclopaedia Iranica Foundation, 1982-).

The planetary lord of this domicile is Jupiter. The sun, the lion and Jupiter have all been linked with power and kingship in multifarious ways.<sup>20</sup> The Safavids espoused a solar calendar and developed an Iranian sense of cosmology through it. Needless to say, the sun signs of the zodiac were very important for them and acted as mediators for meanings attached to specific ideas like kingship. Shahbazi<sup>21</sup> states that the Sun was appropriated by the Safavids in retaliation to their Western rivals, the Ottomans, who had espoused the “crescent moon” as their insignia. This dichotomy had parallels in the *Shāhnāma*, which talked about “‘the Sun of Iran’ and ‘the Moon of the Turanians’” when it referred to the old adversaries of Iranians. Besides, the association of the sun with the lion, which was the title of the Prophet and Imam ‘Alī, meant that the symbol also stood for “glory and religion”. Both the Prophet and Imam ‘Alī were credited with having “possession of a divine light of lights (*nūr al-anwār*) of leadership, which was represented as a blazing halo”. In this way, ancient Iranian concepts like *farr* and *khvarr* that were associated with “kingly glory” also came to be encapsulated in this symbol.

## 2 The “Lion and Sun” in India

The most famous numismatic depictions of the “Lion and Sun” motif in India are seen on “coin-like” objects struck by the Mughal emperor Jahāngīr. The reason for using the cautious term “coin-like” is because although the objects were struck to a monetary standard, we know from contemporary accounts that their *raison d'être* was not primarily to circulate as a medium of exchange but to be used in carefully orchestrated courtly rituals that concerned status, imperial favour and grace, and ideals associated with Mughal kingship. However, for reasons of simplicity I will refer to them as “coins” hereunder.

These coins are famous because, unlike any other group of Mughal coins, they depict a portrait of the emperor on the obverse. Although they were known to numismatists like William Marsden in the nineteenth century, the first historian/numismatist to describe and discuss them in detail was S.H. Hodivala. In a paper published in his *Historical Studies in Mughal Numismatics*, he contextualised these coins with contemporary, or near-contemporary, mentions from records and travelogues,<sup>22</sup> with a couple of examples illustrated

20 For a detailed survey of the “lion god” in antiquity, see Alexander H. Krappe, “The Anatolian Lion God,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 65 (1945), 144-54.

21 Shahbazi, “Flags”.

22 Shahpurshah Hormasji Hodivala, *Historical Studies in Mughal Numismatics* (Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press, 1923), 147-70.



FIGURE 7.4 Jahāngīr (r. 1605-27), gold presentation Mohur with “Lion and Sun” on reverse, lion facing left (British Museum, AH1020/RV6; photograph by author)

here (see Figures 7.4 and 7.5). On the reverse, they depict the “Lion and Sun” motif. The execution of the lion is realistic, but it is worth a note that here the animal does not sport its characteristic mane. Instead, it resembles more a tiger. This is most likely because the word “Sher” in Persian means both lion and tiger. Indeed, in the passages quoted by Hodivala,<sup>23</sup> the Mughal historian Khāfi Khān refers to the animal as “‘Sher’ surmounted or ridden by the Sun”. These coins were struck in the sixth year of Jahāngīr’s reign. On another well-known piece – struck in the eighth regnal year, when Jahāngīr had moved his entourage to the Rajput city of Ajmer (see Figure 7.6) – the device appears on the reverse encircled within the hemistich of a Persian couplet which extolls the virtues of the coin and its issuer, the emperor. Here, the animal is shown in a couchant posture, resting with its front paws crossing over each other.

Even before Hodivala, numismatists like Stanley Lane Poole had provided explanations for the occurrence of this unusual image on these coins.<sup>24</sup> Lane Poole contended that Jahāngīr’s father, the emperor Akbar, had a particular penchant for solar worship, which “undoubtedly found encouragement under Akbar and was never repudiated by Jahangir”. There was an astrological connection too: according to Jahāngīr’s Indian (Hindu) horoscope, the Sun was placed in the house of Leo. This was a “happy sign”, because “... the Sun is the Emperor of the planets and has the Kings of the Earth under his own protection. Leo is the Sun’s own house; he rules the sign and it is called his ‘Throne’ or

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 147, 148.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 162.



FIGURE 7.5 Jahāngīr (r. 1605-27), gold presentation Mohur with “Lion and Sun” on reverse, lion facing right (British Museum, AH1020/RV6; photograph by author)



FIGURE 7.6 Jahāngīr (1605-1627), gold presentation Mohur with a seated portrait and “Lion and Sun”, Ajmer mint (British Museum, AH1023/RV8; photograph by author)

his ‘Joy’ and ... is the house where he is most strong and powerful”.<sup>25</sup> But apart from such contexts, Hodivala outlines historical reasons why this particular sign was adopted by the Mughals as their “royal emblem”. Quoting from the *Narrative of the Embassy of Ruy Gonzales de Clavijo to the Court of Timur 1403-1406*, Hodivala draws our attention to the fact that the emblem already adorned a lofty gateway at Kesh, Temūr’s birthplace. Clavijo noted that since Temūr’s own insignia had been the “three annulets” emblem, the “Lion and Sun” motif

25 Stanley Lane-Poole, *The History of the Moghul Emperors of Hindustan Illustrated by their Coins* (London: Constable, 1892), lxxx-lxxxi.

must have been the sign of the “former Lords of Samarcand”. Hodivala therefore concludes that “the ‘Lion and Sun’ had been adopted as his ‘Coat of Arms’ by Timur” and therefore it had every reason to appear on “the imperial ensigns of his Indian descendants, too”.<sup>26</sup>

It will be appropriate to point out an error in Hodivala’s estimation here, although it does not majorly affect the conclusions that he draws. A close reading of the passage quoted from Clavijo suggests that Hodivala’s inference suggesting the emblem was adopted by Temür as his own “coat of arms” is obviously wrong. Clavijo’s narrative clearly suggests that this was in fact not Temür’s own emblem, and therefore he concluded that the gateways to the palaces on which it appeared must have been constricted not by Temür but by “the former Lords of Samarcand”. These “former lords” were the Chaghatayids, and the Mughals regarded themselves as “Chaghatayids” in terms of their political lineage, although biologically they were descendants of Temür. It is therefore likely that they adopted the “Lion and Sun” as their emblem because it was connected with the Chaghatayids, and not because Temür adopted it as his “coat of arms”.

Be that as it may, it is certain that apart from its appearance on these coins, the emblem was a definite feature of Mughal kingship rituals. There is evidence to suggest that it appeared on Mughal flags, much as it was adopted on Safavid pennants. Hodivala has quoted from the account of Peter Mundy, the East India Company’s factor, who witnessed the cavalcade of Shāh Jahān en route to Agra on 1 June 1632.

... Then thousands of horsemen going breadthwise; then came about 19 or 20 great elephants of State with coverings and furniture; ... some of them carryeing a flagg with the Kinges Armes, which is a Tygar couching with the Sunne riseinge over his backe ...<sup>27</sup>

The numismatic depiction shows up in interesting parallels in other forms of visual representations particularly when it comes to pennants. Noteworthy are paintings from the famous “Windsor Padshahnama” manuscript in the Royal Collection. These were not known to Hodivala, and are therefore worthy of note in the context of the discussion of this emblem. The emblem in its various forms is seen in many paintings of the *Pādshāhnāma* album; however, three examples would suffice here. The first painting shows Jahāngīr receiving Prince Khurram back from a victorious campaign in Mewar, and is attributed to the

<sup>26</sup> Hodivala, *Historical Studies*, 163-4.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 164-5.

artist Balchand (see Figure 7.7).<sup>28</sup> Towards the base of the composition we see a footman carrying a banner over his shoulder, on which the “Lion and Sun” motif is clearly visible (see Figure 7.8), with the lion shown standing on all fours.

A point worth noting is the backdrop of the device, where one sees clouds that are unmistakably executed in the “Chinese” fashion. Similar cloud formations are well known from Chinese, Central Asian and Turkic art. Typically for a Mughal rendering, this banner appears to bring together several artistic tropes: a Central Asian (Chaghatayid) motif which shows parallels in Iran is decorated with Turkic/Chinese features, and is shown on a pennant carried by an Indian footman in a scene that is set in North India.

The second painting is by the artist Payag, the younger brother of Balchand, and it depicts the Mughal siege of Qandahar which was engaged in May 1631 (see Figure 7.9).<sup>29</sup> This is not the famous city of Qandahar in Afghanistan, but a homonymous strategic stronghold in the Deccan, located in present-day Maharashtra state. The painting shows the Mughal army, led by the courtier ‘Azam Khān, approaching the ramparts of the fort and witnessing an explosion. As the vanguard of the army, the soldiers carry two bright-red brocaded pennants, on which the “Lion and Sun” sign is displayed against a backdrop of “Chinese” clouds and stars. The lion here is walking to left, with a leg raised in a stride (see Figure 7.10).

The third painting<sup>30</sup> depicts an event very similar to the one described by Mundy (see Figure 7.11). It is attributed to an anonymous “Kashmiri Painter” and in all likelihood shows a part of the imperial procession in which the Mughal court moved to Lahore from Agra in March 1634. Here, we see a procession approaching a walled city. Unlike Mundy’s description, there are no elephants here but there is a caparisoned horse without a rider. Alongside the horse are two footmen carrying banners made of green fabric, with the “Lion and Sun” embroidered onto them, most likely in gold thread. Here too, the backdrop of the motif is richly decorated with cloud formations in the same “Chinese” style (see Figure 7.12). The lion is depicted couchant, much like it is on Jahāngīr’s coin struck at Ajmer.

The deployment of the “Lion and Sun” motif in this way had very clearly led to its visual association with the Mughal empire and kingship. This can be seen in the way that the Mughal empire had its early reception in the West. By far the most well-known example of its use in this fashion is William Baffin’s early

28 *Pādshāhnāma*, Royal Collection, Windsor, Acc. no. RCIN 1005025.f.

29 *Pādshāhnāma*, Royal Collection, Windsor, Acc. no. RCIN 1005025.s.

30 *Pādshāhnāma*, Royal Collection, Windsor, Acc. no. RCIN 1005025.ai.



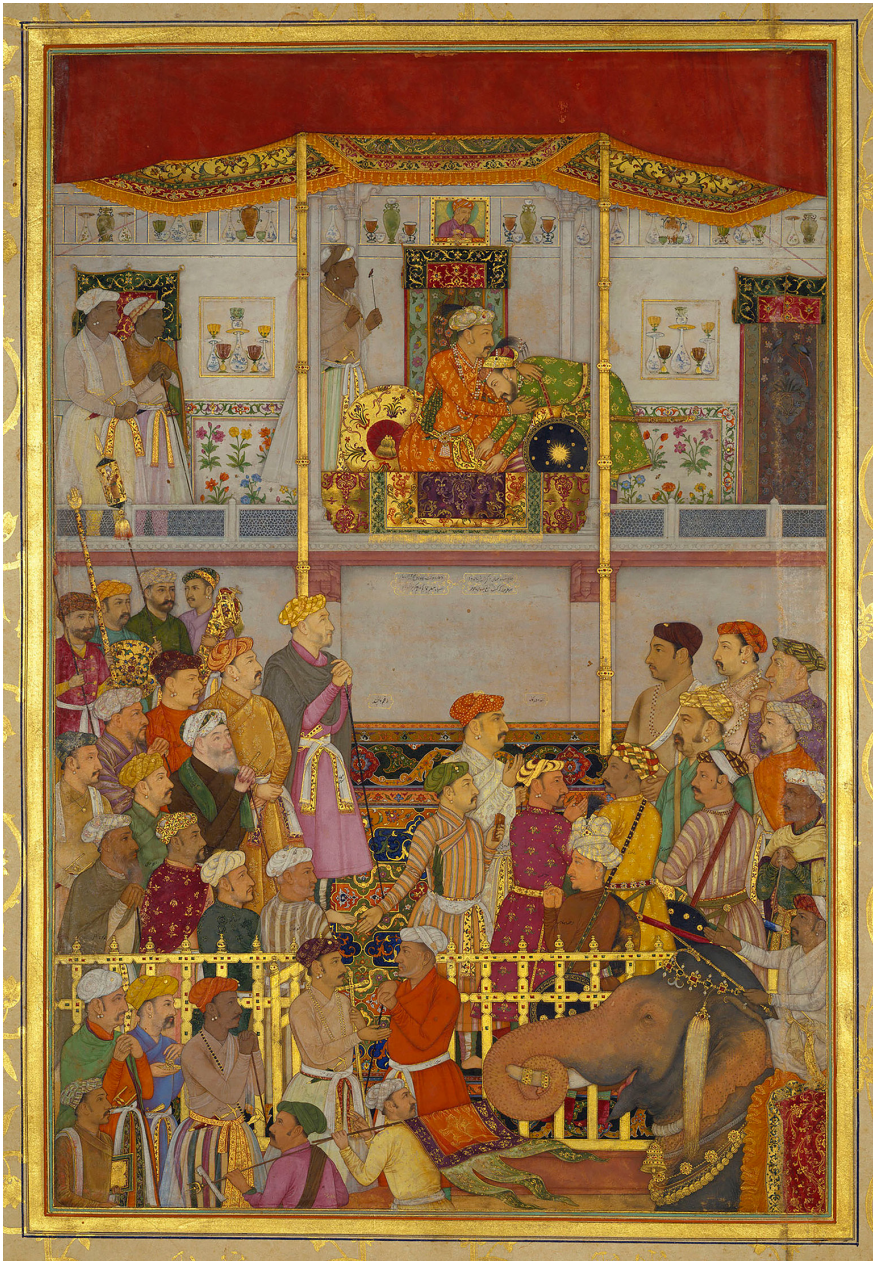


FIGURE 7.7 *Jahāngīr receiving Prince Khurram back from a victorious campaign in Mewar by the artist Balchand (Pādshāhnāma, Royal Collection, Windsor, accession number RCIN 1005025.f)*



FIGURE 7.8 Detail of Fig 7.7, showing footman carrying the banner

map of India (see Figure 7.13), where it appears as a vignette right above the “genealogical seal” of Emperor Jahāngīr, which appears to have generated a lot of curious inquiry leading to its detailed description in other, near-contemporary narratives such as “Purchas his Pilgrimes”. Baffin, better-known as an explorer of the “North-west Passage” connecting the Atlantic and the Pacific – and thus, for giving his name to a bay in Canada – joined the service of the East India Company in 1616/17. He took the post of Master’s Mate and navigator on the East Indiaman *Ann Royal*, and left English shores for India in February 1617, arriving at Surat in September. On his return journey to Britain in 1619, Sir Thomas Roe, the ambassador to the court of Jahāngīr, boarded the *Ann Royal* as a passenger with his entourage. Roe had collected data for thirty-seven cities and towns in the Mughal empire, and Baffin collated it into a map. The map was engraved by Reynold Elstrack and published in 1619.<sup>31</sup>

On this map towards the top right corner, we see the vignette of the “seated lion and sun”, which shows a great resemblance to the one shown on gold coins of Jahāngīr that were struck at Ajmer. This might be more than a coincidence, because we know from Sir Thomas Roe’s account that he was presented with a coin bearing the emperor’s portrait by him while he was received by the emperor at Ajmer. Roe recalls in detail his meeting with Jahāngīr, in which the latter gave him the coin as an “especiall favour” and indicated that Roe was

<sup>31</sup> William Foster, *The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to the Court of the Great Mogul, 1615-1619*, Vol. 2 (London: Hakluyt Society, 1899), 542-6.



FIGURE 7.9 *The Mughal siege of Qandahar*, by the artist Payag (*Pādshāhnāma*, Royal Collection, Windsor, accession number RCIN 1005025.s)



FIGURE 7.10 Detail of Fig 7.9, showing soldiers carrying pennants



FIGURE 7.11 *An imperial procession (in part)*, by the “Kashmiri Painter” (*Pādshāhnāma*, Royal Collection, Windsor, accession number RCIN 1005025.ai)



FIGURE 7.12 Detail of Fig 7.11, showing footmen carrying embroidered banners

exempted from regular rituals showing subservience, such as touching his head to the ground in the emperor's presence. He also indicates that this gift was a very important one, and worth much more ("five times as good as any hee gives in that kind") than its actual metal value. Conceivably, he might have had the gift with him when he returned to England, and might even have shown it to Baffin. On the map, the Latin inscription *Insignia Potentissimi Monarchi Magni Mogoli*, or the "all-powerful emblem of the Great Mughals", circles the motif. This serves as a clear indicator of what the motif meant to its audience.



FIGURE 7.13 William Baffin's early map of India (British Library, acc. no. Maps K.Top.115.22, "William Baffin's map of the Mughal Empire," London: Thomas Sterne, 1619)

### 3 The "Lion and Sun" Beyond India in Numismatics

A reference to how the "Lion and Sun" was regarded as the emblem of the predecessors of the Timurids at Samarqand has already been made, and we have also seen how the motif had been appropriated by the contemporaries of the Mughals in Iran, the Safavids. In fact, its occurrence on Mughal coins can also be seen in the context of the "Persianisation" of the Mughal court, which was particularly espoused by Jahāngīr and his Iranian wife Nūrjahān. Although the motif had always been regarded as an Iranian one, there were obvious instances of its appropriation outside Iran too. In general, these were in the regions on the fringes of the Persian land mass. By far the most famous instance of the occurrence of the emblem in Central Asia, at a time contemporaneous with Jahāngīr in India, is at the Sher Dor madrasa at Samarqand, built by Yalangtūsh Bahādur in the early seventeenth century. Here, it adorns the *pīshṭāq* of the great monument and, much like the "Lion and Sun" emblem on modern



FIGURE 7.14 Aqqoyunlu, bronze *fals* of Nūr al-Dīn Ḥamza b. Qarā Yülük ‘Uthmān (r. 1438-44), (2.2g) (Stephen Alburn Rare Coins, Auction 27, Auction date: 19 January 2017, Lot number: 786)

Iranian money, has been adopted on the banknotes of the Republic of Uzbekistan in a direct attempt to appropriate its Timurid past to serve the cultural and historical identity of a modern nation.

Prior to the sixteenth century, the motif appeared on coins of many Islamic dynasties of the greater Iranian and connected regions. By far the most concentrated instances are from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. It is a well-known fact that many of these dynasties were of Mongol or Turkic ethnic stock, which exhibit an increasing tendency to turn “Persianate” when they appear in regions where Iranian cultural influence predominates. In the fifteenth century we see the motif appearing on Aqqoyunlu coins, such as those struck by Nūr al-Dīn Ḥamza b. Qara Yülük ‘Uthmān (r. 1438-44), shown in Figure 7.14. It is also seen on anonymous copper coins, struck at Mardin, located in southeastern Anatolia, most likely towards the end of the Aqqoyunlu period (see Figure 7.15). In the fourteenth century we see it appearing on copper coins of Jānī Beg, the Khan of the Golden Horde or Jochid branch of the Mongols, struck at Khwarazm (see Figure 7.16). Under the Ilkhanid Mongols, it appears on coins of Abu Sa‘īd (r. 1316-35), also struck at Mardin (see Figure 7.17), and on coins of Arghūn (r. 1284-91), struck at Tus in the Khorasan region, shown in Figure 17.8. It is worth noting that Mardin and Tus are located almost at the northern cardinal points so far as the Iranian cultural sphere extended at this time.

On most of these coins, the motif shows its usual variations, much like it does on the Mughal and Safavid coins. The lion faces right or left, in all instances it is shown standing or walking and on coins is it shown seated. Also





FIGURE 7.15 Aqqoyunlu, anonymous bronze *fals* (2.72g), Mardin mint (Stephen Album Rare Coins, Auction 14, Auction date: 21 September 2012, Lot number: 755)



FIGURE 7.16 Golden Horde, Jāni Beg, AH 743-58/AD 1342-57, billon Pul (25mm, 6.93g), Khwarazm mint (Classical Numismatic Group, Electronic Auction 198, Auction date: 5 November 2008, Lot number: 349)

interesting is the fact that on the coins of Arghun we see a variation, with the inscription *Rasūl Allāh* appearing to be inscribed on the sun that rises over the lion's back. All the other instances of the emblem are decidedly secular. This is perhaps the earliest direct Islamic connection with the motif seen anywhere, and it is all the more fascinating because the ruler who struck these coins was ostensibly a Buddhist, had a Christian mother and had married his sister to the Christian ruler of Georgia. On the coin of Abu Sa'īd, a later Ilkhanid ruler, the motif shows a full solar disc.



FIGURE 7.17 Ilkhanids, Abū Saʿīd Bahādur, AH 716-36/AD 1316-35, bronze *fals* (18mm, 1.56g), Mardin mint (Classical Numismatic Group, Electronic Auction 323, Auction date: 26 March 2014, Lot number: 638)



FIGURE 7.18 Ilkhanids, Arghūn, AH 683-90/AD 1284-91, silver dirham (2.51g), Tus mint (Gorny & Mosch Giessener Münzhandlung, Auction 161, Auction date: 11 October 2007, Lot number: 5781)

The occurrence of the motif on coins in the region of Anatolia is most interesting. In southern Turkey, northern Mesopotamia and Syria, the dominant political dynasties in the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries were Turkmen. They issued a large and varied bronze coinage which was predominantly figural, unlike almost all other contemporary Islamic coinages. A detailed survey of Turkmen figural coinages illustrates many parallels to the coin depiction from various examples of contemporary material culture, such as earlier coinages,



FIGURE 7.19 Artuqids of Mardin, al-Şālih Şālih I, AH 712-65/AD 1312-64. Bronze double *fals* (27mm, 5.94g), Mardin mint (Classical Numismatic Group, Auction 109, Auction date: 12 September 2018, Lot number: 796)

bronze vessels, tile motifs, manuscript illustrations and architectural features.<sup>32</sup> Among the numismatic inspirations, we find motifs that go back around 1,000 years, such as copies of the portrait designs of Seleucid coins. Precisely why motifs from such antique coinages were adopted is still a quandary, and William Spengler and Wayne Sayles in their volume *Turkoman Figural Bronze Coins* contribute very little towards actually ascertaining the reason behind it. The “Lion and Sun” motif also features on some of them, particularly on the coins of the Artuqid ruler of Mardin, Shams al-Dīn al-Şālih (1312-1364). He interestingly deploys it with a denomination context. On double dirham coins we see two lions walking away from each other in a juxtaposed manner with the full solar disc between them (see Figure 17.9), while on single dirhams we see the motif in its more familiar form, with the semicircular sun rising above the back of the lion (see Figure 7.20).

#### 4 The Earliest Numismatic Depictions in Anatolia

The depictions that we see on the coins of the Artuqids in Anatolia bring us to the earliest numismatic depiction of this motif, which is found on the coins of the Seljuq rulers of Rum. As a numismatic type they are very well known, and a complete catalogue is found in Michael Broome and Vlastimil Novak’s

32 See William Spengler and Wayne Sayles, *Turkoman Figural Bronze Coins and Their Iconography* (Lodi, WI: Clios Cabinet, 1992).



FIGURE 7.20 Artuqids of Mardin, al-Şālih Şālih I, AH 712-65/AD 1312-64, *fals* (1.69g), no mint (Wilkes & Curtis Ltd, Auction 11, Auction date: 13 June 2016, Lot number: 130)

seminal publication on the coinage of the Seljuqs of Rum.<sup>33</sup> The motif is seen on the coins of one of the last Rum Seljuq rulers, ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Kayqubād III (r. 1298-1302), but it is Ghiyāş al-Dīn Kaykhusraw II (r. 1237-46) who is credited with its introduction on Rum Seljuq coins.<sup>34</sup>

By far the most obvious feature of the motif as it appears on these coins is the solar disc, which is shown as a full circle above the lion’s back. The lion in most cases walks to right, with one paw raised,<sup>35</sup> with the Abbasid caliph cited in an inscription above him. While a huge number of coins of the type are known in silver, there are very rare issues in gold too (see Figure 7.21). On one gold type, there are two lions walking in opposite directions, shown in Figure 7.22, and it is obvious that this must have been the design inspiration for the copper coins of the Artuqid ruler Şālih, described above.

Broome and Novak have provided us with a very detailed numismatic typology for the type; without going into the finer details of the classification, it would suffice here to note a few key features. As the two authors have noted, the bulk of this coinage was produced at the mints of Konya and Sivas. The design changed abruptly in AH 638/AD 1240-41 when the pictorial device was introduced; prior to that, for nearly four years, Kaykhusraw II had struck coins with non-pictorial designs very similar to those struck under his predecessor, Kayqubād. The pictorial device was abandoned equally abruptly in about AH

33 Michael Broome and Vlastimil Novak, *A Survey of the Coinage of the Seljuqs of Rūm* (London: Royal Numismatic Society, 2011).

34 *Ibid.*, 160-9.

35 *Ibid.* lists one coin, no. 277c, on which the animal walks to the left, but the authors contend that it is a contemporary forgery.



FIGURE 7.21 Seljuqs of Rum, gold dinar of Ghiyās al-Dīn Kaykhusraw II (r. 1237-46) (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 99.35.2379)



FIGURE 7.22 Seljuqs of Rum, gold dinar of Ghiyās al-Dīn Kaykhusraw II (r. 1237-46), (4.48g) (American Numismatic Society, 1962.126.2)

641/AD 1243-4 and a coinage with a more traditional Islamic format was introduced, with features like the *bismillāh* and the *shahāda* appearing alongside the caliph's name and some new titles being appended to the sultan. In this relatively short time the "Lion and Sun" coinage appears to have had a massive issuance, as noted from several minor and major varieties in the dies. Broome and Novak classified these into eight major variations and devised their numismatic typology around them.<sup>36</sup>

The legends on the reverse of the coins can be grouped into three categories depending on their style and calligraphy. Coins struck at Konya show cursive

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 140-1.



FIGURE 7.23 Seljuqs of Rum, silver dirham of Ghiyāṣ al-Dīn Kaykhusraw II (r. 1237-46), Konya mint



FIGURE 7.24 Seljuqs of Rum, silver dirham of Ghiyāṣ al-Dīn Kaykhusraw II (r. 1237-46), Sivas mint

and ornamental letters with characteristic “split upper ends” (see Figure 7.23), whereas coins of the Sivas mint have the letters engraved in a more angular, archaic-looking form. The surrounding legends which give the date, often in the Turkic cypher forms, encase the angular inscription forming a calligraphic rectangle (see Figure 7.24). On some coins, the rectangle is actually a cartouche enclosing the central inscription, while the surrounding inscription is placed within margins between the rim of the coin and the rectangular cartouche. Some coins of the Sivas mint show the cartouche encasing inscriptions engraved in a cursive style, as seen on the coins of Konya.

Kaykhusraw II's coins are by far the earliest chronological instance from which the numismatic genealogy of the “Lion and Sun” motif can be traced. It

is clear that from the middle of the thirteenth century onwards, the motif gradually spread out. This first occurred in other parts of Anatolia and very quickly reached the wider fringes of the Persianate world, which at this time had been witnessing shifts in migration and settlement patterns caused by the invading Central Asian Turks and Mongols for nearly two centuries. It is a well-known fact that these nomadic newcomers regarded the Iranian cultural collective in high esteem and appropriated Persianate ideals of kingship and governance. The adoption of Iranian names like Kayqubād and Kaykhusraw is perhaps the most evident sign of these Turks turning “Iranian” in a cultural sense. This propensity to adapt to Persianate culture has been remarked upon by many scholars who have worked on the history of the Seljuqs of Rum. The choice of the “Lion and Sun” motif adds another facet to this narrative. However, precisely what prompted its adoption on coins for a relatively short time, and what caused its abandonment, are questions to which no satisfactory answer can be found. A connection with the sultan’s marriage to the Georgian princess named Tamar has been envisaged based on the testimony of Bar Hebraeus, a thirteenth-century Syrian Orthodox monk and scholar, but Andrew Peacock has cogently outlined how this is untenable.<sup>37</sup> A detailed discussion on the nature and deployment of the motif is presented by Gary Leiser,<sup>38</sup> in which he dismisses this story by pointing to the fact that Kaykhusraw struck a rare coin type with two lions in the year he was married, not one lion as seen on the more ubiquitous coinage that was issued a few years later. Covering various material and literary sources, and acknowledging its astrological significance, Leiser concludes that the motif was introduced by Kaykhusraw as a “symbol of his reign”, and that the “sun with the human face represented the Sultan who was supreme over man and beast”. The supremacy of the sultan, of course, rested in the articulation that he was the “shadow of the Divine” as per Islamic tenets of theocracy. Perhaps it was likely that the sultan had to remind his subjects of this status, because in the very years in which the coinage was issued Kaykhusraw’s reign was marred by political upheavals.<sup>39</sup> Be that as it may, the appearance of the motif on Seljuq Rum coins did end up creating a long history of its numismatic appearance, which extended well into our own times.

37 A.C.S. Peacock, “Georgia and the Anatolian Turks in the 12th and 13th centuries,” *Anatolian Studies* 56 (2006), 127–46, 141.

38 Gary Leiser, “Observations on the ‘Lion and Sun’ Coinage of Kai-Khusraw,” *Mésogeios* 2 (1998), 96–114.

39 For a summary of these, see Claude Cahen, *Pre-Ottoman Turkey: a general survey of the material and spiritual culture and history c. 1071-1330* (New York: Taplinger Pub. Co. 1968), 135–8.



FIGURE 7.25 Silver dirham of Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Ḥasan Qarlugh (r. 1249-59), (2.55g) (Stephen Album Rare Coins, Auction 17, Auction date: 19 September 2013, Lot number: 546)

## 5 The ‘Lion and Sun’ in India: New Evidence and Fresh Questions

As we saw above, there is no antecedent to the appearance of the “Lion and Sun” image in India before its adoption by the Mughals as their insignia. George Michell has suggested that the motif appears on architecture of the Bahmani Sultans,<sup>40</sup> particularly on a gateway at the city of Firuzabad, founded by the Sultan Tāj al-Dīn Fīrūz Shāh (r. 1397-1422) near his capital Gulbarga, but here the two elements appear to be shown separately and not in a close context with each other as seen on coins. It might have been the earliest instance of the adoption of such motifs in Indo-Islamic architecture, but the occurrence of the lions and the sun as individual decorative elements is quite a different subject than their occurrence together. The earliest numismatic representations of the motif in India are the ones encountered on rare portrait coins of Jahāngīr. The genealogy of this occurrence stems out of the employment of the emblem by the Chaghatayids of Central Asia as their symbol.

These observations were dramatically altered by the find of a unique silver coin, which appeared in an auction in 2013 (see Figure 7.25).<sup>41</sup> Prior to this, in December 2012, Steve Album, well-known numismatist and the then-director of the eponymous auctioneering firm, had sent pictures of it to me. In our

<sup>40</sup> George Michell and Richard Eaton, *Firuzabad: Palace City of the Deccan* (London: Oxford University Press, 1992), 80-3.

<sup>41</sup> Stephen Album Rare Coins, Auction 17, lot 546, 19 September 2013.



private communication, Album said that he had found this coin in an old German collection of Islamic coins that he had purchased earlier in 2013.<sup>42</sup> Barring a listing on the website “Zeno” the coin remains unpublished in numismatic literature, so it will be a good opportunity to describe it here:

Metal – silver; weight – 2.55g

Obverse: lion walking to right, with paw raised, sun-face above its back; Arabic inscription *Nāṣir al-Dunyā wa'l-Dīn* above.

Reverse: in rectangle, inscription in three lines in Sharada script *Sri Ma ha ma / da Ha sa na / Ka ra lu ka*

As indicated by the *laqab* on the obverse and the Indian legend on the reverse, it is clear that this coin was issued by Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad Qarlugh (r. 1249-66?). The Qarlughs were a minor Turkic dynasty that ruled in northwest India. Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad's father was Sayf al-Dīn Ḥasan Qarlugh, who rose to prominence as a member of the retinue of Jalāl al-Dīn Mangubarnī, the Khwarazmshah who invaded the Indian subcontinent in about 1221, taking advantage of the power struggle which erupted as the Ghurid empire crumbled. He established himself in the aftermath of the invasion in the regions of Ghazna and Kurraman, and of Binban or Hazara and the Koh-i Jud mountains, which were strategically placed on a trade route between Ghazna and northern parts of present-day Pakistan. After Iltutmish, the sultan of Delhi, defeated the last rebellious Ghurid commander, Nāṣir al-Dīn Qubācha, in 1229, Ḥasan Qarlugh acknowledged his suzerainty. But after Iltutmish's death in 1236, he entered into an allegiance with the Mongols and embarked on a short-lived expansionistic phase, penetrating into the regions of Southern Punjab (Multan) and Sindh, to the south of his stronghold. Ḥasan died in 1249, leaving his son Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad in charge of his domains. The new Qarlugh sultan had to contend with his namesake Nāṣir al-Dīn Maḥmūd, a powerful sultan of Delhi, and therefore adopted a pragmatic stance of having good relations with both the Mongols and the sultans in Delhi, while maintaining a nominal subordinate relationship with the Mongol Khan. But during his career he allied himself with some rebels of the Delhi court, which ultimately brought his downfall in about 1266, when his kingdom was annexed by Ghiyāṣ al-Dīn Balaban, who had succeeded Maḥmūd as the sultan at Delhi, and had embarked upon a

42 Stephen Album uploaded the coin on the ‘Zeno’ online database for oriental coins in December 2012: [www.zeno.ru](http://www.zeno.ru), Zeno #120013.

massive campaign against the Mongols to consolidate his hold on the Punjab and Sindh.<sup>43</sup>

The Qarlughs struck coins in their own names, and although they maintained a subordinate relationship to the Mongols they never cited their overlords on their coins. Sayf al-Dīn Ḥasan issued silver *tankas* citing the Abbasid caliphs, and a range of copper and billon types in the denomination known as *jital*.<sup>44</sup> While Arabic featured on the coins of higher denomination, the lower-value coins used Indian scripts, mainly Nagari, for their legends. A large number of coins struck by Ḥasan's successor, Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad, have been recovered from the Salt Ranges and they are mainly *jitals*.<sup>45</sup> Ghazna and Kurraman feature as mint names on certain types (see Figures 7.26-27). In most instances his coins are bi-scriptural, with legends in Arabic and Sharada appearing on either side. Until the discovery of the silver coin described above, no silver coins attributed to Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad Qarlugh were known.

The silver coin is remarkable for more than one reason. The first is the employment of local scripts for a legend that ostensibly gives the sultan's name in an Indian fashion. It is appended with the honorific "Shri", and then the name follows the order of first name (Muḥammad); father's name (Ḥasan); and the clan name, which could well be seen as a surname in the Indian sense (Karluka = Qarlugh). The *laqab* of the sultan, *Nāṣir al-Dunyā wa'l-Dīn*, does not really fit into this schema, so it has been moved to the obverse.

But by far the most significant aspect of the coin is the fact that it copies those of Ghiyāṣ al-Dīn Kaykhusraw II, the Rum Seljuq sultan, in exactitude so far as the design is concerned. The copying is not a "blind" act, but intentional because while copying the overall appearance of the Rum Seljuq type, Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad Qarlugh has added some really interesting innovations and variations on the theme. The first noticeable variation is the execution of the solar disc, which is smaller and closer to the body of the lion and creates an effect of the sun rising from its back. Second, the citation to the Abbasid caliph is dropped entirely and is replaced by the sultan's *laqab*. Third, on the reverse the legend is in a non-Islamic script. The fact that it is encased in a rectangle clearly shows that Kaykhusraw II's coins of the Sivas mint must have acted as a prototype for this issue.

This not only extends the genealogy of the "Lion and Sun" motif in India by more than three centuries but also demonstrates that it was adopted almost

43 André Wink, *Al-Hind: The Making of the Indo-Islamic World*, Vol. II, *The Slave Kings and the Islamic Conquest, 11th-13th Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 200-1.

44 S. Goron and J.P. Goenka, *The coins of the Indian Sultanates*, (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 2001), 489-90.

45 Wink, *Al-Hind*, 201.



FIGURE 7.26 Billon *jital* of Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Ḥasan Qarlugh (r. 1249-59), (3.48g), Ghazna mint



FIGURE 7.27 Billon *jital* of Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Ḥasan Qarlugh (r. 1249-59), (3.52g), Kuraman mint

contemporaneously on coins of two dynasties that were located far apart from each other. There is no doubt that Kaykhusraw II inaugurated its use on his coins but Muḥammad Qarlugh appears to have followed suit very quickly, perhaps in a matter of one and half decades. It is interesting to note that the regions where the kingdoms producing these coins were located are at almost the opposite ends of the Turkic world at this time. They could also be viewed as the western and eastern fringes of the Iranian cultural ambit. But while the Rum Seljuq rulers' aspirations to turn culturally "Persian" are well known, we

have no such information for the Qarlughs. In fact, the usage of Sharada script on Muḥammad Qarlugh's coins suggests his closeness to the Indian cultural sphere.

There is not much information available on direct trade between the two kingdoms, although we know that the Qarlugh kingdom had control over regions producing rock salt, which might have been used as a potential trading commodity across a wide area. However, the Anatolian kingdom is not really likely to have relied on supplies from faraway Punjab for the salt that it needed; it would have had plenty of natural resources to exploit for the commodity much closer to home. The uniqueness of Muḥammad Qarlugh's coin stands out in comparison with the huge output of Kaykhusraw II's coins with the "Lion and Sun" motif, and ostensibly there are no records of Rum Seljuq coins turning up in the Punjab – neither are Qarlugh coins ever noted to have been found in Anatolia. So it is less likely that trade was the intermediary vector in causing this numismatic parallelism. Equally, there is no evidence on hand about any political connections between the two dynasties. Ḥasan Qarlugh's master Jalāl al-Dīn Mangubarnī is known to have invaded the northeastern fringe of the Rum Seljuq kingdom, but that was some years before the issue of the "Lion and Sun" coins by Kaykhusraw II. Both Kaykhusraw II and Muḥammad Qarlugh shared the political fate of being forced to swear allegiance to the Mongols. It is plausible that Kaykhusraw II's coins might have travelled eastwards as part of a tribute paid to the Mongol great khan, who in turn gave some of them as payment to his mercenary soldiers who brought them to northwestern India and thus they were sighted by Muḥammad Qarlugh. Be that as it may, we only have guesses to offer to explain how the two kingdoms could have interacted in a numismatic sense.

## 6 Rum Seljuq and Qarlugh Connections: "Transculturation"?

This is where the discursive debate outlined at the beginning of this chapter needs a re-visit. If trade or political links, the most common forms of networks that could bring material cultures together, do not really seem to provide an answer to what caused the coins of the Rum Seljuqs to be imitated in faraway northwest India, what could the reason be? Is the occurrence of the same motif, one evidently copying the other earlier instance, within such a short span of time indicative of "polyglotism" or is there a more mundane and functional numismatic reason behind it – like adapting to an already existing coinage?

At the outset it is evident that the second option was almost certainly not the case in Muḥammad Qarlugh's copying of Kaykhusraw II's coins. As noted earlier the issuance of this type was evidently a very short-lived one, and in the

Qarlugh territories there was no antecedence of such a numismatic denomination nor any such numismatic design. So Muḥammad Qarlugh did not issue the coin to fit in with a monetary reality that already existed in his domain, and he had a vested interest in continuing.

From a viewpoint of transculturation and objects “speaking different languages”, the two near-contemporary instances of the “Lion and Sun” motif appearing at the two ends of the Iranian cultural world each have their own nuances. For Kaykhusraw II, the most likely driving factor in introducing it on his coins was his connectedness with the Persianate cultural world, which was in league with the gradual Persianisation of the Seljuq Turks. However, for the Qarlugh Turks, sandwiched between the Persian and the Indian cultural spheres, “Indianisation” was equally significant as “Persianisation”. The coinage that Muḥammad Qarlugh issued bears testimony to this sensitivity. On the “Lion and Sun” coin he chose to inscribe his name not only in an Indian script but also in an Indian fashion, in the “first name–father’s name–surname/clan-name” format. He appears to have done away with the Islamic format, except that his *laqab* appears on the obverse. From a transculturation perspective, these features fit well in the mechanisms of “objects in translation” that Flood has put forward. What is lacking here, however, is the precise knowledge of what sort of monetary contact these two rather weak kingdoms would have had, to have facilitated the import of an image from faraway Anatolia into northwest India.

Perhaps this can be explained from a deeper, more anthropological viewpoint. The Seljuqs and the Qarlughs were both Turks who originated in Central Asia and then migrated towards Iran, establishing themselves in settled kingdoms through their military and political acumen.<sup>46</sup> Would it be too far-fetched to assume that in the middle of the thirteenth century they shared a knowledge about their Turkic identity, and considered themselves primarily “Turks” even though they now inhabited very different and distant geographic and cultural worlds? Was the motif of “Lion and Sun” adopted by Muḥammad Qarlugh as an indicator of cultural sophistication only because another Turk king was doing it in a distant land? In other words, did the ethnic identities of these rulers play a part in cross-pollinating the motif? This might be a plausibility given that we have not much evidence of any other activity between the Rum Seljuqs and the Qarlughs. I will now present further numismatic evidence to underline this aspect. Much like the silver coin of Muḥammad Qarlugh, the

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46 For a description of Turkic presence in the Indian subcontinent, including some discussion on the “identity” connotations of the term, see *ibid.*, 61-7.

arguments and observations made hereunder rest partly on a coin which is hitherto unpublished in numismatic literature.

## 7 The “Horseman” Motif on Twelfth-century Turkic Coins in India and Beyond

The introduction of a totally new numismatic type, including the denomination, is not a peculiarity demonstrated by Muḥammad Qarlugh alone. Nearly five decades earlier, the same propensity was shown by the Islamic armies that invaded Bengal in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. The conquest was carried out in the name of Muḥammad b. Sām of the Ghurid house of Ghazna, but the composition of the Ghurid army was dominated by Turkic cavalry led by several Turkic generals. Quṭb al-Dīn Aybak, the most prominent of the “Maliks” under the Ghurid overlords was a Turk, and so was Ikhtiyār al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Bakhtiyār Khiljī, the architect of the Ghurid conquest of Bengal, who came from the Khalaj subgroup of Ghuzz or Oghuz Turks. In 1205, Bakhtiyār Khiljī sacked Nudiya, the pre-eminent city of western Bengal, and established an Islamic government at Lakhnauti, the capital of the predecessor Sena dynasty.<sup>47</sup> On this occasion, commemorative coins were struck in gold and silver in the name of Muḥammad b. Sām.

These coins are of a type pretty much unknown before in the region. They depict a horseman facing to left, holding a mace in his hand, with the horse in gallop. They are dated Ramadan, AH 601 (April-May 1205) and in addition to the Arabic legends also carry the Devanagari label *Gauda Vijaye* or “Conquest of Bengal”, citing their *raison d'être* (see Figure 7.28).<sup>48</sup> Coins of both metals are struck to the denomination often referred to as *tanka* weighing around 10.8 grammes, but the weight of the silver coins is heavier at 12.6 grammes. But soon afterwards, coins of the “Horseman” type were struck in a different denomination, described as a “fractional Tanka of 20 *Rati*”, “*Rati*” being the name of the basic Indian standard for weighing gold.<sup>49</sup> These coins weighed around 2.3 grammes and also have the “Horseman” as their chief type feature, but unlike the commemorative issues they only bear inscriptions in Indian script and language. The name of the Ghurid supreme sultan is indicated in Devanagari script as *Shri Ma ha / mi ra Ma Ha / ma da Sa ma* in three lines. Around the “Horseman”, the date and month of issue are inscribed as per the Hindu

47 Ibid., 48-149.

48 Goron and Goenka, *The coins*, 146, Type B1.

49 Ibid., 146, Types B2 and B3.



FIGURE 7.28 Bengal, gold *tanka* in the name of Mu‘izz al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Sām, struck by Muḥammad Bakhtiyār Khaljī, AH 601/AD 1204, celebrating the conquest of Bengal as suggested by Devanagari legend below the “Horseman” (British Museum; photograph by author)

*Vikrama Samvat* (vs) calendar (see Figure 7.29). The earliest of these coins are dated in the month of *Bhadrapada* in the year vs1262, which corresponds to August 1205. From extant specimens we can observe some salient changes in the execution of the “Horseman”. On some coins he carries a mace or sceptre, as on the “victory commemorative coins”, but on others he carries a sword. Both attributes are indexical to suggest royalty or authority. On coins issued in the month of *Ashwina*, which succeeds *Bhadrapada* in the Hindu calendar, we see the “Horseman” galloping to right carrying a long lance (see Figure 7.30), but here, the Indian legend on the reverse has given way once again to an Arabic inscription. The type was continued for a few more years, and coins in the name of successive sultans/governors – namely Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish, Rukn al-Dīn ‘Alī Mardān and Ghiyāṣ al-Dīn ‘Ivaṣ – are known.<sup>50</sup> The gold is restricted to the “fractional” *tanka* denomination and is quite rare, but the silver *tankas* are relatively more common – although by no means profuse. Gradually, the type, barring the figural motif of the “Horseman” is fully Islamicised, with features like the *shahāda* making an appearance.

The internal chronology of the issuance of these coins is comprehensible. The earliest examples, which are commemorative, show Islamic characteristics such as a script that would have been quite alien in Bengal at this time, but these coins quickly give way to those having Indian inscriptions and employing a Hindu dating system, which then gradually ease back into coins with

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 146-9.



FIGURE 7.29 Bengal, temp. Muḥammad Bakhtiyār Khaljī (r. 1204-6), gold fractional *tanka* of 20 rati (17mm, 2.28g) in the name of Mu‘izz al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Sām, sultan of Delhi (Classical Numismatic Group, Auction 105, Auction date: 10 May 2017, Lot number: 1118)



FIGURE 7.30 Bengal, temp. Muḥammad Bakhtiyār Khaljī, (r. 1204-6), gold fractional *tanka* of 20 rati, in the name of Mu‘izz al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Sām, sultan of Delhi (J.P. Goenka collection, Kolkata/Mumbai, India; photograph by author)

Arabic and fully Islamic inscriptions. The unusual aspect here is that there is no antecedence for the type, or for the denominations, in Bengal. It is perfectly understandable that coins would be struck in the name of the sultan in a newly conquered territory, owing to the tenets of *khuṭba* and *sikka* that define Islamic kingship – but why introduce an entirely new design?

This brings us to the question of the nature of the “Horseman” image and what it meant for the Turks. The horse had a particular importance in the nomadic lifestyle of people inhabiting the steppes, like the Turks. Nearly a





FIGURE 7.31 Seljuqs of Rum, ‘Izz al-Dīn Qılıj Arslān II b. Mas‘ūd (r. 1155-92), bronze *fals* (20mm, 3.85g), “Horseman” type (Classical Numismatic Group, Electronic Auction 323, Auction date: 26 March 2014, Lot number: 549)

millennium earlier, the “king mounted on a horse” was adopted as a coin type by the Indo-Scythian rulers. Seen from the perspective of Turkic identity, to show the king mounted on a horse appears to be an explainable choice. But the question we might ask is: Where did the inspiration come from? The most interesting aspect here is the fact that in the case of this motif too, we see trans-regional connections with Anatolia, almost contemporarily to the appearance of the motif in Bengal.

The “Horseman” motif first appeared on coins in Anatolia during the reign of the Rum Seljuq sultan ‘Izz al-Dīn Qılıj Arslān II (r. 1156-92). He struck copper coins with the motif of the “Horseman” charging to the right, holding a lance (see Figure 7.31).<sup>51</sup> As the coins are undated and the sultan had a relatively long reign of thirty-eight years, we cannot ascertain precisely when they were struck. But it is interesting to note that the period of his reign overlaps the Ghurid ascendancy in present-day Afghanistan, and the gradual uptake of Turkic soldiery and cavalymen in the Ghurid army. The origins of the design are uncertain, but coins of the crusader king Roger II of Antioch, which had what is conceivably the Christian image “St George kills the dragon”, have been suggested as a prototype. But Broome and Novak have voiced their scepticism about this theory, instead suggesting that the image was “traditionally associated with tribal origins” of the Rum Seljuqs and thereby pointing to its association

<sup>51</sup> Broome and Novak, *A Survey*, 41-2.

with the Turkic identity of these rulers.<sup>52</sup> Qılıj Arslān II's successor Ghiyās al-Dīn Kaykhusraw I (r. 1192-6, 1205-11) continued with the design on his copper coins, but substituted the lance in the king's hand with a sword.<sup>53</sup> During the temporary period of fragmentation that followed the death of Qılıj Arslān II, the "Horseman" motif continued on copper coins. Rukn al-Dīn Sulaymān II (r. 1196-1205), who consolidated the Rum Seljuq sultanate, put it on his silver coins as well.<sup>54</sup> The coins in this period showed the horseman holding a mace. The noteworthy point here is that in Anatolia as well as Bengal, the horseman on the coins evidently went through carrying the same repertoire of attributes – a lance, a mace and a sword – although not always in the same order. These images must have been in circulation in the Turkic world, which was characterised by moving bands of soldiery opportunistically seeking openings in military career at courts like that of the Ghurid rulers of Ghazna – giving them the benefit of mustering the numbers required to undertake major campaigns, like the invasion of India.

So far we have instances where the image, be it the "Lion and Sun" or the "Horseman", appears first in Anatolia and then its reception follows in India. However, there is evidence at hand to suggest that this was not always the case. We have at least one numismatic image, a variation on the "Horseman" theme, which appears first in India and then in Anatolia. This coin, shown in Figure 7.32, is so far unpublished and it is worth describing in full detail:

Denomination – *tanka*

Metal – silver; weight – 10.9g

Issuer – Ghiyās al-Dīn 'Ivaż, governor in Bengal but in the name of Shams al-Din Iltutmish, sultan of Delhi

Obverse: horseman riding to right in a circle, carrying strung bow and arrow and shooting an arrow with a circular/bifurcated tip to right; Arabic legend beginning with the *shahāda* in the margins, ... *Muḥammad Rasūl Allāh* and continuing with the AH date as *bi-ta'rikh* ..., but the rest is not visible. Probably the word *al-Jā'iz* follows *bi-ta'rikh*.

52 Ibid., 42.

53 Ibid., 48.

54 Ibid., 57.



FIGURE 7.32 Bengal, silver *tanka* of Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish (r. 1210-35) (10.9g), “horseman archer” type (Private collection, Dubai; photograph by author)

Reverse: Arabic legend in four lines – *al-sultān al-aʿẓam Shams / ... (wa) al-Dīn Abū al-Muẓaffar / Iltutmish al-Sultānī Nāṣir / ... al-Muʿminīn*

Evidently this coin was struck in continuation with the “Horseman”-type coins first issued soon after the conquest of Bengal in 1205 but, as explained earlier, the type has now become fully Islamicised, barring the figural depiction of the horseman. The “archer” image of the horseman adds a new depiction to the repertoire – although a horseman with a bow, probably placed in a bow-case on the rump of the horse, had already appeared on silver coins struck by Rukn al-Dīn ‘Alī Mardān, the rebellious predecessor of ‘Iwaḍ, who had dared to strike coins in his own name between c. AH 606-10/AD 1209-13. ‘Iwaḍ is known to have assumed control of Bengal after quelling a rebellion in 1213 and then ruled until 1227 alternating between independence and subservience to his master, Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish in Delhi. His first coins are dated AH 614-16/AD 1217-19/20; they are of the “Horseman” type and they bear the name of Iltutmish.<sup>55</sup> In AH 616/AD 1219/20 he struck coins in his own name for the first time that did away with the “Horseman” design. But these appear to be a sporadic issue, possibly struck as a statement of short-lived independence.<sup>56</sup> The next issue in his own name is dated AH 619/AD 1222/3, so it is possible that coins in the name of Iltutmish were struck in between and they could well have been of the “Horseman” type. Thus, although the date of the coin described above is

<sup>55</sup> Goron and Goenka, *The coins*, 148, Types B16-B22.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 149, Types B25-B28.

not discernible, because of the fact that it is in the name of İltutmish and of a “Horseman” type we could safely place it in the earlier part of ‘Iwaḍ’s tenure. So it is plausible that it was issued some time between AH 614/AD 1217 and AH 619/AD 1222/3.

The usage of the “Horseman” motif on the coins of the Rum Seljuqs in Anatolia had been fading over the same period. The “horseman carrying a mace” design featured on coins of Rukn al-Dīn Sulaymān II b. Qılıj Arslān in both silver and copper. It was abandoned from silver coins struck during the second reign of Ghiyās al-Dīn Kaykhusraw I b. Qılıj Arslān (r. 1204-11) but continued on copper coins. It was omitted entirely from coins of ‘Izz al-Dīn Kaykā’ūs I (r. 1211-19), who ruled a part of Anatolia, and of his successor ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Kayqubād I (1219-37).<sup>57</sup> The Rum Seljuq coins of this period are entirely inscriptional, shunning any figural representations. “Horseman”-type coins were struck in Cilicia, in south Anatolia, by the Armenian Christian king Hetum I (r. 1226-70) as a vassal of Rum Seljuq rulers Kayqubād I and his successor Ghiyās al-Dīn Kaykhusraw II, but the depiction is somewhat different to the ones seen on earlier Anatolian coins (see Figure 7.33).<sup>58</sup> We, of course, know Kaykhusraw II as the issuer of the short-lived but profuse “Lion and Sun” figural coinage. At the end of his reign, the Rum Seljuq sultanate fragmented into eastern and western parts with ‘Izz al-Dīn Kaykā’ūs II ruling in the west and Rukn al-Dīn Qılıj Arslān IV in the east. By this time, the Rum Seljuqs had effectively become vassals to the Mongols under the Great Khan, Hülegü.

It is at this time that we find that the “Horseman” design revived for a short time – on coins struck at Sivas in the name of Rukn al-Dīn Qılıj Arslān IV, which are dated AH 646/AD 1248/9 (see Figure 7.34).<sup>59</sup> Although they were issued almost thirty years after the “Horseman” coin of İltutmish just described, the similarity in the composition of the horseman design is surprising. The direction and the general posture of the horse is similar, so is the position of the archer and even small and seemingly unimportant details – such as the knotted tail of the horse – appear to correspond to each other. Another noteworthy feature is the arrow, which on both coins is distinctly of a different type than that with the usual pointed tip. On the coin of İltutmish, it appears to have an annulet tip, whereas on the coin of Qılıj Arslān IV, it has a bifurcated tip. Broome and Novak have remarked that such arrows were used for “stunning” the prey during a hunt,<sup>60</sup> and thus the depiction of the Seljuq sultan is as a

57 Broome and Novak, *A Survey*, 65, 77, 91-2.

58 *Ibid.*, 390-1.

59 *Ibid.*, 189.

60 *Ibid.*, 188.



FIGURE 7.33 Armenian/Seljuqs of Rum, silver tram/dirham in joint names of Het'um/Kaykhusraw II, Sis mint, dated AH 637/AD 1239-40 (2.90g), (St. James's Auctions Ltd, Auction 38, Auction date: 29 September 2016, Lot number: 161)



FIGURE 7.34 Seljuqs of Rum, Rukn al-Dīn Qılıj Arslān IV, first sole reign (r. 1248-9), silver dirham (23mm, 2.77g), Sivas mint (Classical Numismatic Group, Auction 85, Auction date: 15 September 2010, Lot number: 1321)

horseman hunter. It is very interesting to note that the motif on Qılıj Arslān's coins matches more closely that on the coin of İltutmish, struck in faraway Bengal, than the one found on coins of king Hetum I, the Armenian ruler of Cilicia, which were struck closer in both space and time, and as a vassal of the Rum Seljuqs.

## 8 Epilogue: Coin Motifs and Transculturation

The similarity in motifs adopted on coins of closely contemporaneous yet spatially distant ruling authorities brings us back to the debate about their purpose and deployment in creating and analysing wider anthropological narratives involving transculturation. Very evidently, this sort of similarity would not occur unless there was a “point of contact”. The possibility of that point of contact being through trade, or political activities between India and Anatolia, is remote simply because there is no evidence of it between the Rum Seljuqs in Anatolia and the Qarlughs in Sindh, or other Turks further east in Bengal. However, there are two aspects which might have provided opportunities for such “praxis” – as I have confessed at the beginning of the chapter, these remain “possibilities”, rather than foregone conclusions.

The first of these is the notion of kinship and identity, and the socio-political dynamics that these factors would bring in. The single factor that links the Qarlughs in Sindh, or the early Islamic rulers in Bengal, and the Seljuqs of Rum was that they were all “Turks”. The employment of certain motifs, like the “Lion and Sun” emblem, reflects deeper identity shifts among them, such as the propensity towards “Persianisation” which the Rum Seljuqs show, that are also attested by other similar conscious decisions, such as changes in onomastics and forms of governance. However, these shifts were not shared by all Turks – as, for example, the Qarlughs in Sindh did not really aspire to be culturally “Persian” in any way. However, they did consider themselves “Turks” and therefore could have translated the emblem adopted by another ruler that shared the kinship as a higher and exotic means to emphasise shared kinship. The image of the “Horseman”, culturally associated with the nomadic steppe lifestyle for a long time, feeds in a similar way into the notion of being a “kinship hallmark”. The fact that the adoption of these images on coins from Anatolia and India was a chronologically two-way process indicates that they must have been circulated, received and consumed as part of a broader “pan-Turkic” imaginary.

The fact that the Turkic people moved, and often moved over vast distances, could have provided the visual praxis for the images to be cross-pollinated in such a fashion. The mainstay of Turkic circulation was the soldiery, which moved from one ruling entity to the other but also sometimes settled in their new lands of adoption. André Wink has mentioned that over 6,000 Khalaj and Ghuzz Turks went over to the Seljuqs at Herat in 1152. Wink also mentions the settlement of Seljuq Turks in the Juggaur district of Awadh as early as 1184, when they “allegedly accepted the governorship of the province on behalf of

Shihab ad-Din and colonised numerous villages in the area”.<sup>61</sup> Curiously enough, the descendants of these Seljuq Turks in Awadh claimed their ancestry from “Rum”, with an Oghuz Turk governor of Diyarbekir as their progenitor.<sup>62</sup> It is interesting to note that Wink’s information is quoted from the gazetteer of the province of Awadh, a colonial “information-gathering” project of the nineteenth century. While it is plausible that a precise date of settlement like “1184” might not be factually valid, it is equally true that this excerpt shows that the memory of the Seljuqs and of Rum was still in circulation among the population of Awadh as late as the nineteenth century. Perhaps the close interplays of memory and history would mean that there is some grain of truth in it. The fact at its basis is quite indisputable: that Turkic people moved to and settled in far-off lands in a relatively short space of time, which precisely covers the period in which these numismatic images originated and circulated.

The story of the origin and spread of the “Lion and Sun” as a numismatic motif between Anatolia and India is important in order to situate and contextualise the interconnectedness of visual imagery through population movements and the dynamics involving socio-anthropological notions of kinship and identity among nomadic cultures like that of the Turkic people, particularly when they underwent sedentarisation. It is quite likely that there is more to it than simply a functional monetary reason, because these occurrences are unique inasmuch as they are without precedence. The motifs that they carry therefore become “indexical” to a host of themes. Similar circulations, movements and cross-pollinations in other aspects of material culture, including architectural motifs, were discussed by Flood. A similar “dialogue” involving coins re-emphasises their role as “objects of translation”.

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<sup>61</sup> Wink, *Al-Hind*, 138.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

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# When Brick Met Stone: Turko-Iranian Brick Architecture and its Interaction with the Lithic Traditions of India and Anatolia

*Richard Piran McClary*

At around the same period in history Turkic Muslims with their roots in Central Asia entered, and subsequently controlled, most of Anatolia as well as large portions of the north of the Indian subcontinent.<sup>1</sup> In both these cases of conquest of previously non-Muslim controlled territory, the new rulers brought pre-existing brick building styles developed in the wider Iranian world into regions which had traditionally relied on primarily lithic construction methods.<sup>2</sup> By taking a comparative overview, and examining several structures in close detail, it is possible to show the two different architectural aesthetics which emerged when invaders with similar cultural, linguistic and ethnic backgrounds introduced Islamic forms into Anatolia and the Indian subcontinent.

The introduction of architectural forms developed in brick for Islamic commemoration and worship, and the decorative vocabulary used to ornament such buildings in both brick and stucco, into an almost entirely lithic milieu resulted in a process of dynamic synthesis and innovation. Part of this process involved the adoption of local elements and the reuse of materials from entirely different types of buildings. This led to the creation of some of the most truly original architectural styles developed in the medieval Islamic world.

This chapter examines the transformation of the wide array of architectural forms and decoration which had developed in brick in the wider Iranian world into stone in the context of Anatolia on the one hand and India on the other.<sup>3</sup>

1 For an overview of the conquest of these two areas, see Stephen Dale's chapter in this volume.

2 Although Byzantine architects in the west of Anatolia used stone combined with larger, thinner bricks than those used in the eastern Islamic world (*opus mixtum*), the largely Georgian and Armenian architectural traditions of central and eastern Anatolia were almost exclusively based around the use of stone. For a good overview of Byzantine building materials and techniques, see Robert Ousterhout, *Master builders of Byzantium* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), especially 128-200.

3 For details of the Central Asian origins of the elements of the brick architectural aesthetic found in Anatolia, see Richard McClary, "Architecture of the Wider Persian World: From

The aim here is to touch on some of the more general commonalities, and the striking differences, through the examination of a number of the rather less well-known early structures. This will demonstrate that, despite the broad similarities in the initial conquest phase, major differences in the resulting aesthetics emerged over the following centuries in the two regions. Brick, for all its advantages for speed of construction and ability to impart a sense of mass, does not offer the crispness and curvilinearity that stone does, and the type of marble carving seen on portals in Anatolia and *mihrābs* in India appears to draw instead on the stucco-carving tradition of Iran. The major difference, in the context of Anatolia, is the externalisation and monumentalisation of the more durable stone media.<sup>4</sup> In the context of India, new forms developed, as well as the multiplication of traditional elements such as the *mihrāb*, and the increased external articulation of those *mihrābs*. Local stone carvers interpreted the wishes of the new rulers, in addition to craftsmen, quite likely Indian in origin, who had worked further to the north for Muslim rulers, prior to returning to India to work on the vast amount of new buildings which were required by the new rulers.

For those with an interest in the contemporaneous emergence of two distinctive, hybrid and syncretic styles of Islamic architectural form and decoration, in India and Anatolia, there is a rather limited number of scholarly publications.<sup>5</sup> An increasing amount of the early monuments, in both regions, have been addressed singularly or in groups,<sup>6</sup> but several remain very poorly understood, as do many of the broader process and themes relating to

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Central Asia to Western Anatolia in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries”, in Yuka Kadoi (ed.), *Persian Art: Image Making in Eurasia* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018), 37-59, especially 37-41.

4 See Robert Hillenbrand, “Brick versus Stone: Seljuq Architecture in Iran and Anatolia”, in Ismail K. Poonawala (ed.), *Turks in the Indian Subcontinent, Central and West Asia* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2017), especially 135-6, for an excellent summary of the key differences between the Anatolian stone-built Islamic monuments and earlier brick-built and stucco-decorated structures in Iran and Central Asia.

5 The most significant is probably Finbar Barry Flood, “Lost in Translation: Architecture, Taxonomy and the Eastern “Turks”, *Muqarnas* 24 (2007), 79-115, along with elements of idem, *Objects of Translation: Material Culture and Medieval “Hindu-Muslim” Encounter* (Princeton, NJ/Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2009).

6 For Anatolia, see Richard Piran McClary, *Rum Seljuq Architecture, 1170-1220: The Patronage of Sultans* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017). For a number of the earliest monuments in northern India, see Mehrdad Shokoohy and Natalie H. Shokoohy, “The Architecture of Baha al-Din Tughrul in the Region of Bayana, Rajasthan,” *Muqarnas* 4 (1987), 114-132, and idem, *Nagaur: Sultanate and Early Mughal History and Architecture of the District of Nagaur, India*, (London: The Royal Asiatic Society, 1993; Royal Asiatic Society Monographs Volume XXVIII).

their development. An attempt to address such a vast topic and area must inevitably take a very broad-brush approach. However, by addressing a fairly limited selection of structures, in both India and Anatolia, which date from the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, it is possible to strike a balance between the micro and the macro. The aim is to give a sense of the largely contemporaneous developments which resulted from Turko-Muslim invaders patronising established forms of architecture in new lands, and a different medium of construction, across vast areas of the newly expanded *dār al-Islām* in the period of study.

The two very different aesthetics which subsequently developed in Anatolia and India were largely the result of the great differences between the arcuate forms in the pre-existing church architecture of Christian Anatolia on the one hand, and the trabeate tradition of Hindu and Jain temple architecture on the other. Within this broad rubric, there was of course far greater complexity, with evidence of Indic stonemasons having worked in Afghanistan for Muslim patrons in the late twelfth century returning to India in the wake of the Ghurid conquest and working on mosques.<sup>7</sup>

The early development of a distinctively Indo-Islamic aesthetic was a two-stage process, with trabeate spolia structures being erected in the form of Arab hypostyle mosques, with the necessary architectonic elements such as *miḥrāb* niches and minbars being newly carved, in the first phase under the Ghurids. The second phase, pioneered by Aybek but really expanded under Iltutmish,<sup>8</sup> saw the addition of huge pointed-arch screens in the Iranian manner, but in stone and with corbelled arches, such as those at the Quwwat al-Islam mosque in Delhi and the Adhai din ka Jhompara mosque in Ajmer. These additions gave a far more distinctively Islamic feel to the structures, and mark the beginning of true hybridity, rather than what appears to be largely practical expediency, combined with elements of conscious cultural appropriation in the first phase. The aim here is not to re-examine the debate around the reuse of architectural material, as this is a topic which has been discussed in great detail by numerous scholars, including Alka Patel and Finbar Barry Flood. Instead, the focus is on the translation of brick forms and motifs into stone.<sup>9</sup>

7 For details concerning the mobility of craftsmen between India and Afghanistan, see Flood, *Objects of Translation*, 189-90 and 217-20; and Flood, "Lost in Translation," 111.

8 For details of Aybek and Iltutmish, see Blain Auer's chapter in this volume.

9 See Flood, *Objects of Translation*, 149-52 for a discussion of the various possible reasons for the preference of spolia over newly cut stone elements in the early mosques of the Ghurid period in India. For the broader context of reuse, see Alka Patel, "The Historiography of Reuse in South Asia," *Archives of Asian Art* 59 (2009), 1-5. For a discussion of the extent of temple destruction in the early period of Muslim rule in India, see Richard M. Eaton,

## 1 Turkish Buildings in Anatolia

The Muslim conquest of Anatolia by Turks was completed sooner than it was in India, and the necessary stability allowing for large-scale construction also occurred earlier, and so it is to monuments in Anatolia that attention turns first.<sup>10</sup> The citadel mosque in Divriği boasts the earliest surviving decorative portal attached to an Islamic building in Anatolia, and is securely dated, by the upper inscription, to 576/1180-1. The mosque is rectangular, with the short side facing towards *qibla*. The portal is built in a hybrid style which reflects the eclectic nature of the early phase of Islamic architecture in Anatolia. It was built for the Mengüjekid ruler Sayf al-Dīn Shāhanshāh, who ruled from about 1175 to 1197, and the lintel features the signature of the craftsman in Kufic script: Ḥasan (?) ibn Pirūz (?) al-Marāghī. Although it is in stone, this early transitional structure has stones cut to look like bricks on the arch.<sup>11</sup> The portal also has examples of incised construction lines for the design of the carved patterns, in the same manner as can be seen on Central Asian brick buildings of the twelfth century, such as the Qarakhanid portal of the Maggok-i Attori mosque in Bukhara.

It was not just in portal design that the process of transition and translation can be seen. The Tepsi minaret, in the southwest corner of the Erzurum citadel in eastern Anatolia, has the same battered form as seen in the Qarakhanid minarets of Central Asia, such as the ones in Balasagun, Uzgend and Bukhara. The base of the minaret is in black basalt, with a transitional section in alternating bands of red and white stone, and internal stone steps, but the bulk of the shaft is built with the standard thin square bricks of the Iranian tradition,

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“Temple Desecration and Indo-Muslim States,” in Sunil Kumar (ed.), *Demolishing Myths or Mosques and Temples? Readings on History and Temple Desecration in Medieval India* (Gurgaon: Three Essays Collective, 2008), 93-139. For the most recent study of the use of spolia in the context of medieval Anatolia, see Suzan Yalman, “Repairing the Antique: Legibility and Reading Seljuk *Spolia* in Konya,” in Ivana Jevtić and Suzan Yalman (eds), *Spolia Reincarnated. Afterlives of Objects, Materials and Spaces in Anatolia from Antiquity to the Ottoman Era* (Istanbul: Koç University Research Centre for Anatolian Civilizations, 2018), 211-36.

- 10 Given the more extensive research on the shift from brick into stone in the context of Anatolia, and the greater focus on India in this volume, more attention is given to the Indian monuments, with the Anatolian material provided as a counterpoint to the contemporaneous developments in India. For the most recent study on the shift from brick to stone in Anatolia, see Hillenbrand, “Brick versus Stone,” 105-43.
- 11 For a detailed study of the design and construction of the Divriği citadel mosque portal, see Richard Piran McClary, “Craftsmen in Medieval Anatolia: Methods and Mobility,” in Rachel Goshgarian and Patricia Blessing (eds), *Architecture and Landscape in Medieval Anatolia, 1100-1500* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017), 35-8, and pl. 1 for a large colour image taken prior to the recent restoration.

measuring 20 centimetres square and with a thickness of 5 centimeters.<sup>12</sup> It is at the Tepsi minaret, over all other structures in the region, that the most intimate union of brick and stone can be found, as the inscription band around the top consists of blocks of white stone with deep slots cut out, into which bricks are set, with only a small portion visible, in order to create the inscription. Subsequently, in cities under Artuqid rule such as Mardin and Hasankeyf, stone minarets were built. However, unlike the long tradition of building square-plan minarets in Syria such as the recently destroyed example at the main mosque in Aleppo, the southern Anatolian examples feature the cylindrical shaft developed in brick in Great Seljuq Iran.

## 2 Spolia

The appropriation and reuse of spolia by the victor is a common trope seen across conquered regions, and is by no means exclusive to the Islamic tradition.<sup>13</sup> Destruction of religious monuments, especially for the purposes of reusing their architectural elements, was primarily an Indian rather than Anatolian phenomenon in the Muslim conquest and early period of rule in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. This was due in part to the far greater degree of intermarriage in the case of Anatolia, with Armenian and Georgian princesses remaining Christian, and having churches inside the royal palaces,<sup>14</sup> while their sons were raised as Muslims.<sup>15</sup>

Although it is the Indian monuments which make the most striking and conspicuous use of spolia in the context of Islamic architecture, in Anatolia

12 For a detailed study of the Tepsi minaret, and its formal relationship with earlier Qarakhanid minarets in Central Asia, see McClary, "Architecture of the Wider Persian World," 37-43.

13 For examples of the destruction of idols and monuments by Indian rulers prior to the period of Muslim Turks, see Eaton, "Temple Desecration and Indo-Muslim States," 105-6. See also A. Azfar Moin, "Sovereign Violence: Temple Destruction in India and Shrine Desecration in Iran and Central Asia," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 57/2 (2015), 467-96, especially 467-70.

14 One example which survived into the early twentieth century was the church of St Amphilochios in the citadel of Konya. There are also remains of a church in the Seljuq palace in Alanya. See Seton Lloyd and D. Storm Rice, *Alanya (Alā'yya)* (London: British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara, 1958), 34-5 and pl. IX (d).

15 For details of the intermarriage with Byzantines and Georgians, and evidence for the ongoing practice of Christianity in the Seljuq court, see Rustam Shukurov, "Harem Christianity: The Byzantine Identity of Seljuk Princes," in A.C.S. Peacock and Sara Nur Yildiz (eds), *The Seljuks of Anatolia: Court and Society in the Medieval Middle East* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2013), 115-51, especially 116-18 and 121-2.

there are extensive examples of the reuse of both Byzantine and earlier structural elements, such as columns and capitals, as well as earlier decorative and figural sculpture both as decoration and simply as construction material. However, there was no wholesale reconstruction using elements of earlier buildings, and the use of spolia in Anatolia was generally limited to the reuse or recutting of decorative marble elements. There are some exceptions to this, with the Roman theatre at Aspendos being the most striking example. In that case the second-century stage building was converted into a palace, and newly built plastered masonry was incised with lines to imitate the earlier ashlar work around it.<sup>16</sup>

Perhaps the most striking use of spolia in the context of Rum Seljuq architecture, and the one most likely to be laden with meaning due to the prominent location, was the extensive use of figural sculpture on the exterior of the city walls in Konya, built during the rule of 'Alā' al-Dīn Kayqubād in 1219-21.<sup>17</sup> The most conspicuous example was a colossal headless statue of Hercules which was used alongside newly-carved zoomorphic sculptures, all of which may have been intended to conflate the contemporary, historical and mythic times.<sup>18</sup>

A wide array of different Byzantine capitals and columns were reused in the construction of the second phase of the Alaeddin mosque in Konya, probably built in the first two decades of the thirteenth century. At around the same time, one of the most quintessentially syncretic structures in Anatolia, the Ertokuş tomb and madrasa at Atabey, near Isparta, between Konya and Antalya, was built in 1224. It consists of a stone portal accessing a largely stone-built madrasa, with a raised mosque area and a brick-and-stone tomb beyond. The seemingly jumbled mix of elements belies an underlying sense of order, with reused marble jambs and lintels alongside limestone rubble, and brick for the arches and domes. Inside the tomb Byzantine spolia sections are recut as window frames. The attempt at coherence becomes clearer when the tomb is compared with the earlier tomb of 'Izz al-Dīn Kaykā'ūs in Sivas, which is a far more traditionally Iranian style building, in brick.

The exterior of the tomb has *ablaq* stone walls, but the corners and roof remain in brick. In addition, along the south wall of the madrasa near the entrance is the head of a statue, as well as stones with defaced crosses used as ashlar. The appropriation of Christian elements into the tomb and madrasa of

16 See Scott Redford, "The Seljuqs of Rum and the Antique," *Muqarnas* 10 (1993), 151-2.

17 *Ibid.*, 153.

18 *Ibid.*, 154. See 153-4, figs 8 and 9 of the same article for nineteenth-century drawings of the now lost walls in Konya.

a member of the Muslim elite is not accidental, and is clearly making an overtly political statement of subjugation of the old order and the rise of the new.

Unlike in India, there are several sites across Anatolia which used both brick and stone, with the brick reserved for either minarets or, as in the case of the Sivas hospital, for the tomb and *riwāqs*, as well as for decorative elements, as seen in the mosques of Akşehir.<sup>19</sup> The Ferruh Şah masjīd, built in Akşehir in 1224, has a mix of glazed inserts, brick pointed arches and indigenous stone spolia all combined to create a quick, relatively cheap, but identifiably Islamic building right on the frontier with the Christian Laskarids.

Alongside the adoption of forms and decoration developed in brick for the construction of stone buildings, the plastic possibilities for carving stone led to what may be viewed as the monumentalising and externalising of high-relief carvings previously reserved for stucco decoration applied over brick on many of the Seljuq monuments in Iran. Some of the most striking examples are to be found on the portals of the mosque-and-hospital complex in Divriği, built for the local Mengüjekid ruler Dāwūd II b. Bahrām Shāh, and completed in 1228-9.

### 3 Turkish Buildings in India

Attention now turns to some of the contemporaneous monuments which were built under Muslim patronage in India, including a number of early conquest-era mosques and the first tomb. The Adhai din ka Jhompara mosque in Ajmer is well studied and will not be addressed to any great extent here, and the same goes for the Quwwat al Islam mosque and the Qutb minar in Delhi for the same reason.<sup>20</sup> Although these structures are the best-known and most important early monuments in India, the focus here is primarily on some of the lesser-known early structures in order to provide a more nuanced approach and highlight the variety of monuments erected in the early period. There are two mosques, the Charasi Kamaba in Kaman and the Ukha Mandir in Bayana, along with a brief mention of the Shahi mosque in Khatu. This will be followed by some observations about the Sultan Ghari tomb in Delhi, built in 1231.

19 See Richard Piran McClary, "The Re-use of Byzantine Spolia in Rüm Saljuq Architecture," *Copy – Paste. The Reuse of Material and Visual Culture in Architecture*, *Bfo-Journal* 1 (2015), 14-22.

20 See Robert Hillenbrand, "Political Symbolism in Early Indo-Islamic Mosque Architecture: The Case of Ajmīr," *Iran* 26 (1988), 105-18 for the former and throughout Flood, *Objects of Translation* for the latter.

### 3.1 *Twin Minarets*

The clearest example of near-direct translation, of both form and decoration, from brick to stone, is the Qutb minar in Delhi. It is closely based on the form of earlier Ghurid and Ghaznavid minarets in Afghanistan, with the tapering of the Ghurid minaret of Jam and the stellate plan of the Ghaznavid minarets in Ghazni, and features relatively little in the way of Indic ornament, but has extensive inscriptions in Arabic.<sup>21</sup>

One formal element which appears to have emerged in the northwest of Iran in the second half of the twelfth century, and migrated to both Anatolia and India during the period spanning the late twelfth through to the late thirteenth centuries, is the use of twinned minarets over a portal. One of the earliest known, although now lost, examples was at the portal to the Momine Hatun tomb in Nakhchivan,<sup>22</sup> with subsequent examples found from as far afield as Konya in western Anatolia, Yazd in central Iran and Ajmer in India. The Iranian and Anatolian examples are all brick-built, even if – as is the case in Konya, Sivas and Erzurum – the portals upon which they are placed are built of stone.<sup>23</sup> In contrast, the truncated remains of the two minarets atop the corners of the central elevated section of the screen added to the Adhai din ka Jhompara mosque in Ajmer by Iltutmish in 1229–30 are, like the rest of the screen, built entirely in stone (see Figure 8.1).<sup>24</sup> Their ribbed form is very similar to the far larger Qutb minar built in Delhi between 1199 and 1236, as is the use of collars and a visible taper.

In a near-contemporary text, the *Javāmi‘ al-Ḥikāyāt* of Sadīd al-Dīn Muḥammad ‘Awfi, the epigraphic collars on the Qutb minar in Delhi are compared with an amulet inscribed with Qur’anic verses strung around the neck of a believer.<sup>25</sup> If, in the words of Finbarr Barry Flood, the minarets were “implicitly

21 See J. Horovitz, “The Inscriptions of Muḥammad Ibn Sām, Quṭbuddin Aibeg and Iltutmish,” *Epigraphica Indo-Moslemica* (1911–12), 16–19 and 26–9.

22 See Turgay Yazar, *Nahcivan’da Türk Mimarisi (Başlangıcından 19. Yüzyılın Sonuna Kadar)* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2007), 414–15. The surviving tomb is dated 582/1186.

23 For a study of twin minarets in Anatolia, see Richard Piran McClary, “A Corpus of Thirteenth-Century Brick Rum Seljuq Minarets,” in Robert Hillenbrand (ed.), *Seljuq Architecture* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, forthcoming).

24 For the surviving inscription band on the northern minaret giving the name and titles of Iltutmish, see Horovitz, “The Inscriptions of Muḥammad Ibn Sām,” 29 and pl. xxvi. For photographs of the inscriptions and analysis of the various possible readings, see Simon Digby, “Iltutmish or Iltutmish? A Reconsideration of the Name of the Delhi Sultan,” *Iran* 8 (1970), 61, and pls 1a–1b.

25 Flood, *Objects of Translation*, 242–3.





FIGURE 8.1 Twin minarets, Adhai din ka Jhompara mosque, Ajmer © Richard Piran McClary

anthropomorphized” by such a comparison, then it is possible that such an interpretation may be applied to the smaller, later pair of minarets at Ajmer.<sup>26</sup>

The similarities extend to the plans, as the Ajmer and Delhi minarets feature alternating semicircular and right-angle ribs, giving a “reeded and flanged” appearance.<sup>27</sup> These short stubs can be seen as evidence of the ways in which the lithic Indo-Ghurid style of building drew on formal and stylistic tropes from across the wider Iranian world and transformed them into a distinctively Indian style of building during the early syncretic development phase of Islamic architecture in India. Subsequently, the extension to the Ukha Mandir in Bayana, built in 1320-21,<sup>28</sup> had very similar twin minarets added over the entrance portal, albeit on a slightly smaller scale to the ones in Ajmer.<sup>29</sup> Although

26 Ibid.

27 Hillenbrand, “Political Symbolism in Early Indo-Islamic Mosque Architecture,” 113 notes that this plan can be seen in both tombs and minarets built under Seljuq patronage in Iran.

28 Shokoohy and Shokoohy, “The Architecture of Baha al-Din Tughrul,” 126.

29 Due to the reduced scale there is no internal helix staircase in the Bayana examples, while there is in the somewhat larger ones in Ajmer.

only short stubs survive at the Ukha masjid the same alternating ribbed and flanged plan can be seen.

### 3.2 *Namāzgāh / ʿIdgāh*

A structural typology and basic form which transferred directly from Central Asia to India, with a shift from brick to stone, was the *namāzgāh*, referred to as an *ʿidgāh* in India. The addition of screen walls, in Delhi and Ajmer, and the contemporaneous construction of the *ʿidgāh* north of Bayana,<sup>30</sup> are all arguably a translation of the large central iwan with lower flanking arches of a single side of a four-iwan mosque courtyard, and structures such as the Qarakhanid *namāzgāh* in Bukhara, of the early twelfth century.<sup>31</sup> Here there is a more direct transfer of form from brick to stone, with a similar aesthetic and use of inscriptions, the use of corbelled rather than voussoir arches notwithstanding.

## 4 Ghurid Monuments in India

The Ghurid conquest of northern India was by no means a monolithic event or a simple linear process of expansion. Throughout the final three decades of the twelfth century their occupation of regions was often sporadic, and at times they only tenuously held, or occasionally even lost possession of, land.<sup>32</sup> Such fluid political and military realities must have, in part, affected the development of the nascent Indo-Ghurid architectural aesthetic in the region.

The greatest significance, for the purposes of this study, lies not in the copying from one medium to another in a different place but in the changes, innovations and syntheses that occurred as a result of the interaction of different traditions, craftsmen and materials. These led to the emergence of a distinctive and fresh aesthetic that was unlike anything which had gone before, in either the Muslim or the Hindu tradition.

The early Indian *mihrābs* represent the first example of true arches in the lithic Islamic architecture of India, due to the small scale and lack of a structural load-bearing role. The cinquefoil-style arches can be seen to draw on the

30 For details of the *ʿidgāh*, see Shokoohy and Shokoohy, "The Architecture of Baha al-Din Tughrul," 129-32.

31 See V.A. Nil'sen, *Monumental'naya Arkhitektura Bukaraskogo Oazisa XI-XII vv* (Tashkent: Akademii Nauk Uzbekskoi SSR, 1956), 69, fig. 29.

32 Alka Patel, "Expanding the Ghurid Architectural Corpus East of the Indus: The Jāgeśvara Temple at Sādaḍi, Rajasthan," *Archives of Asian Art* 59 (2009), 37.



FIGURE 8.2 *Tōraṇa* gates, Rudra-Mahalaya Shiva temple, Siddhpur © Richard Piran McClary

lobed brackets of *tōraṇa* gates built to access temple complexes,<sup>33</sup> such as the ones at the Rudra-Mahalaya Shiva temple at Siddhpur in northern Gujarat,<sup>34</sup> which when placed together created an arch-like form suitable for integration into the Islamic architectural context (see Figure 8.2).

The Shahi mosque in Khatu features the processional stairway and elevated platform familiar to temples, a form which was to become something of a leit-motif for Indian mosques in a way not seen across the wider Islamic world. The mosque dates from some point in the late twelfth to early thirteenth centuries, and has the standard double-stacked reused column format for the prayer hall with reused corbelled domes above. It has one of the finest of the early marble polylobed arched *mīhrābs*, which, unlike the rest of the construction elements, was newly carved for the purpose, with Qur'an 9: 18-22 in cursive script around

33 The same arch form as seen in the Indian *mīhrābs* can be seen on small marble funerary reliefs from Ghazni and Bust. See Flood, *Objects of Translation*, 191-2 and 196-9.

34 For a study of the complex, and details of the conversion of the site to a mosque, see Alka Patel, "Architectural Histories Entwined: The Rudra-Mahalaya / Congregational Mosque of Siddhpur, Gujarat," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 63/2 (2004), 144-63.

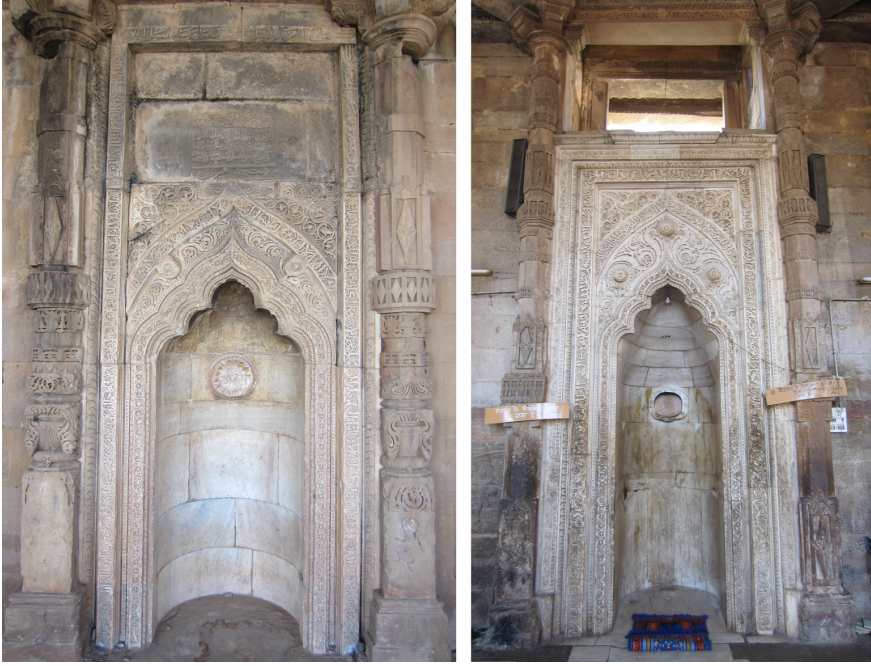


FIGURE 8.3 *Mihrāb* of the Shahi mosque, Khatu (left), and the Adhai din ka Jhompara mosque, Ajmer (right) © Richard Piran McClary

the edge. The Shahi *mihrāb* is very similar to the one at the Adhai din ka Jhompara mosque in Ajmer and is likely to have been produced in the same workshop (see Figure 8.3).

Located a little further east and south is the Chaurasi Khamba mosque in Kaman, which is among the earliest of the surviving monuments built in India under Ghurid occupation. The name simply means “eighty-four columns”, and it was built in 1204.<sup>35</sup> A case has been put forward for the patron having been Malik Bahā’ al-Dīn Ṭuḡhrī, one of Muḥammad Ghūrī’s generals;<sup>36</sup> however, the date makes it more likely to have been built under the patronage of Aybek. It has an example of a rectangular *mihrāb* niche, as seen in most of the early Indian mosques, but there is only one, as opposed to the multiple niches seen in most other early mosques in India. In addition, the Chaurasi Khamba has the

35 Michael W. Meister, “Indian Islam’s Lotus Throne: Kaman and Khatu Kalan,” in Finbar Barry Flood (ed.), *Piety and Politics in the Early Indian Mosque* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2008), 253-4.

36 Shokoohy and Shokoohy, “The Architecture of Baha al-Din Tughrul,” 114.



FIGURE 8.4 *Mihrāb* and minbar, Chaurasi Khamba mosque, Kaman © Richard Piran McClary

earliest surviving minbar in India (see Figure 8.4). This structural element is an example of the translation of a wood structure developed in Iran and the Levant into stone in India, showing that forms and decoration developed in multiple media across the Islamic world were replicated and integrated into stone.

As another one of the earliest Ghurid buildings to survive in India, the Ukha Mandir in Bayana is relatively poorly studied. It dates from the early thirteenth century and is thought to have been built at the behest of Malik Bahā' al-Dīn Ṭughril.<sup>37</sup> Although the building has been extensively remodelled and altered over the course of the last eight centuries, and is in very poor condition, it is at least mercifully unrestored and retains a genuine patina of originality.

As with most early Indian mosques, the vertical elements are double- or triple-height stone pillars from earlier temples, along with reconstructed corbelled domes, also apparently sourced from earlier temple structures. There is a *pishtaq*-like portal and three *mihrābs*, as well as an enclosed elevated *mulūk khāna* at the far right end of the *qibla* wall. The inscription of the central *mihrāb* has been effaced, and there is no record of the original text, but it does retain the ajouré carvings on the arch, as well as the carved panels in the rear

37 The only study remains *ibid.*, 121-6.



FIGURE 8.5 South secondary *mihrāb* (left) and central *mihrāb* (right), Ukha Mandir, Bayana  
© Richard Piran McClary

and traces of engaged columns (see Figure 8.5). The portal has a similar form as the Ghurid-era one attached to the Friday mosque in Herat, albeit without inscriptions and with a corbelled arch.<sup>38</sup> Comparisons may also be made between the screen portal in Ajmer and the Herat portal, as the former has a very similar style of outer inscription band in Kufic with attenuated *hastae*, but in stone instead of glazed tiles.

A large Hindu temple structure was built in front of the *qibla* wall at some point during the Mughal period.<sup>39</sup> The addition is less than two metres away from the original wall and obscures the central *mihrāb*, which is now only visible through the use of flash photography, but not the other, less decorative, *mihrābs* either side. The structure is now a Hindu shrine as well as serving as a private residence. The building has a similar plan to that of the Chaurasi Khamba in Kaman,<sup>40</sup> and reflects the type of sub-imperial mosques which were being built during the early years of Muslim rule in India. The area near the entrance is the least altered, and the original appearance is clearer, with the stacked columns and highly defaced figural elements – although, as with most examples of iconoclasm executed towards spoliated architectural elements in mosques, the exact date of the defacement is unclear.

It is clear that in both Anatolia, such as in Sivas and Erzurum to name but two examples, and across northern India it was relatively low dark mosques with large courtyards in the Arab style which were the most popular type. This is in contrast to what was happening in Iran at the time, where large brick-built domed prayer halls were becoming increasingly common. The surviving

38 See Erik Hansen, Abdul Wasay Najimi and Claus Christensen, *The Ghurid Portal of the Friday Mosque of Herat, Afghanistan* (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2015).

39 A number of engrailed, or lobed, arches were also inserted between the pillars around the edge of the courtyard at the same time.

40 See Shokoohy and Shokoohy, "The Architecture of Baha al-Din Tughrul," 117, fig. 2.

Indian examples all have *rivāqs* around the courtyard, and even with the addition of the screens in Delhi and Ajmer there was no attempt to create the full impression of a four-iwan courtyard-mosque typology in the early period.

The majority of the structural elements in the early mosques in India are reused temple and monastery components, from a number of different sources, but the *mihrābs*, being an entirely new architectural element, are – like those at Khatu, Ajmer and Kaman – composed of entirely newly carved stones. It is these *mihrābs* which lay the foundations for the synthesis of a uniquely Indian Islamic aesthetic which was to emerge over the following decades.

## 5 From Stone into Brick

Due in part to the physical boundaries put in place at the time of Partition, as well as the preponderance of brick instead of stone for many of the monuments in what is now Pakistan, the two related elements are rarely treated as one.<sup>41</sup> However, there are several incidents in which there is a reversal of the standard process, and decorative elements developed in the lithic tradition of India occur in Islamic monuments built of brick.

Many of the Indian mosques of the early period have reused stone columns and capitals which feature the prominent *pūrna kalaśa*, or vase of plenty. There are also examples in Pakistan of brick monuments built for Muslim patrons having carved bricks featuring the same motif. These are clearly not spolia but newly carved bricks, adopting an ancient Indic symbol<sup>42</sup> and integrating it into a *mihrāb*. One of the finest surviving, if damaged, examples, datable to the last quarter of the twelfth century,<sup>43</sup> is at the Ghurid Ribat of ‘Alī b. Karmakh at Kabirwala in the Punjab.<sup>44</sup> This structure, in a new and distinctively Indo-Ghurid style, bears similarities to elements of what was being built in Delhi and Ajmer at the same time, but in brick rather than stone, and points to the fluidity and hybridity that was under way in the nascent Islamic architecture of the region in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. It also

41 Many of the medieval Islamic monuments in the Indus valley have recently been published in a monograph. See Holly Edwards, *Of Brick and Myth: The Genesis of Islamic Architecture in the Indus Valley* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2015). See also Robert Hillenbrand, “Turco-Iranian Elements in the Medieval Architecture of Pakistan: The Case of the Tomb of Rukn-i ‘Alam at Multan,” *Muqarnas* 9 (1992), 148-74.

42 For a study of the vase of plenty and its use as a symbol in the art and architecture of India, see Prithvi Kumar Agrawala, *Pūrna Kalaśa or The Vase of Plenty* (Varanasi: Prithvi Prakashan, 1965).

43 Edwards, *Of Brick and Myth*, 205.

44 See *ibid.*, 208-9, figs 31-4.

highlights the fact that elements developed in India and in stone were adopted into brick, and that it was not a simple binary process of translating motifs developed for building with brick into stone construction.

Another example of this phenomenon can be seen in the skeuomorphic pilasters with fictive capitals on the exterior of an anonymous brick-built tomb at Aror in Sindh. The form of the capitals is identical to the ones seen in Hindu temple architecture, and used in the spolia and spolia-style mosques built under Ghurid and later patronage across northern India. The inclusion of this motif on a brick tomb indicates the rich mix of styles, techniques and craftsmen in the region, and the complex interplay of different regional and cultural traditions in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.<sup>45</sup>

## 6 The Sultan Ghari Tomb

The final structure to be examined is a tomb complex. Located south of Delhi, eight kilometres from the Qutb minar, is the so-called tomb of Sultan Ghari, dated to 1231,<sup>46</sup> and actually built by Iltutmish for his son Nāṣir al-Din Maḥmūd. It is the earliest surviving monumental Muslim tomb in India and features what appears to be the earliest use of the octagonal plan in the architecture of Muslim India, although octagonal-plan tombs occur earlier in Ghurid and Ghaznavid controlled territories to the north, including one in Bust.<sup>47</sup> The octagonal tomb in Delhi is sunk into the ground, with a flat roof, and limited monumentality (see Figure 8.6), especially in the light of what was to come later in India and the scale of earlier royal Muslim tombs further north, such as that of Sultan Sanjar in Merv. Although there is no superstructure, the sunken octagonal form of the tomb corresponds closely with that of many of the Seljuq tomb towers across Iran and Anatolia.<sup>48</sup>

It is perhaps this building over all others which inspires comparisons between India and Anatolia, with its octagonal tomb and the mosque topped with a pointed octagonal-plan roof in a manner more commonly seen in Anatolia. There is also the use of marble, seen in the thirteenth-century portals of

45 The same motif is repeated on the *qibla* wall inside the tomb. For a study of the tomb, see *ibid.*, 184–8, including figs 8, 9 and 10.

46 See S.A.A. Naqvi, “Sulṭān Ghāri, Delhi,” *Ancient India* 3 (1947), 5 for a transcription and translation of the inscription around the marble entrance portal.

47 See Howard Crane, “Helmand-Sistan Project: An Anonymous Tomb in Bust,” *East and West* 29/1 (1979), 241–6.

48 This point has been previously noted in Elizabeth Schotten Merklinger, *Sultanate Architecture of Pre-Mughal India* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 2005), 29.





FIGURE 8.6 Interior and *mihrāb*, Sultan Ghari tomb, Delhi © Richard Piran McClary

both Konya and Sivas as well as the early Islamic architecture of India. There is reused and newly cut marble, with the ornate *mihrāb*, shown in Figure 8.6, being of a similar typology to the ones seen in Kaman and Bayana, as well as the slightly later examples in Iltutmish's own tomb in Delhi.

In addition to the marble columns in front of the mosque area there is also a white marble entrance portal framed with an epigraphic band. This is a lithic monochrome variant of the type of portal seen in earlier Ghurid structures such as the portal of the Friday mosque in Herat. As with all the sandstone windows piercing the upper walls of the enclosure, the white marble portal arch is corbelled, with a central stone that hints at the beginning stage of the embracing of the idea of a keystone by the masons responsible for its construction (see Figure 8.7).<sup>49</sup>

While it is generally assumed that all the reused elements were part of a Hindu temple which previously occupied the site, numerous fragments of figural carved stones from a Buddhist monument of the Gupta period were embedded into the structure, prior to their removal and transfer to the National Museum in Delhi in 1963. The items of red sandstone, consisting of lintels and a railing pillar, are datable to the late fourth or early fifth century.<sup>50</sup> The presence of architectural fragments that were over half a millennia old when the site was built, along with the majority of the far less-ancient marble and sandstone columns and corbelled ceilings, raises a number of questions concerning

49 For a detailed description of the tomb, see Naqvi, "Sultān Ghārī", 8-9, and pls 11-v1 for plans, sections and elevations of the site.

50 See R.C. Agrawala, "Unpublished Gupta Reliefs from Sultān Ghārī, near Delhi," *East and West* 18/ 3-4 (1968), 315-18 and figs 2-16.



FIGURE 8.7 Eastern façade and portal, Sultan Ghari tomb, Delhi © Richard Piran McClary

both the nature of the previous structure and the sources of the materials used to build the existing one. Alas, the lack of evidence makes answers far more elusive than questions in this instance. The overall visual effect of the building is quite unusual, with an exterior appearance closer in form to a fortification, and the low octagonal tomb, of a type not seen elsewhere in the Islamic world, and a small mosque enclosure in axial alignment with the entrance in the east and the tomb in the centre.

## 7 Conclusion

Although the early Islamic monuments in both Anatolia and India feature spolia, it is seen to a far greater extent in the Indian monuments. There is some transfer of brick forms and decoration into stone in both regions, but in Anatolia there are numerous examples of brick as well as stone, while in India there is limited use of brick outside of the Indus valley in the west and, later, in Bengal in the east.<sup>51</sup> In India there is evidence for the transfer of the royal cham-

<sup>51</sup> See Edwards, *Of Brick and Myth* for the early Islamic architecture of the Indus valley. For details of some later brick-built mosques in Bengal, see Hasan Perween, "Sultanate Mosques and Continuity in Bengal Architecture," *Muqarnas* 6 (1988), 58-74; and Syed Mahmudul Hasan, *Mosque Architecture of Pre-Mughal Bengal* (Dacca: University Press Limited, 1979).

ber, at the far right of the *qibla* wall, from Ghurid mosques, and the use of indigenous spoliated material to create an axial hierarchy to accentuate the central element of the mosque in line with the *mihrāb*. Neither of these are seen in the context of early Islamic architecture in Anatolia.

Despite the broad commonality of sources, two very different aesthetic traditions can be seen to have emerged in the Islamic architecture of Anatolia and of India. In Anatolia the forms employed were largely the same, due in part no doubt to the pre-existing arcuate tradition of building long established under the Byzantines. In addition, there was a continued use of brick alongside stone – especially for the cylindrical minarets, such as the one added to the great mosque in Sivas in 1212-13,<sup>52</sup> as well as hybrid part-brick and part-stone buildings, including the ‘Izz al-Dīn Kaykā’ūs hospital in Sivas<sup>53</sup> and small mosques in the frontier town of Akşehir.<sup>54</sup>

This is in contrast to the Indian experience, where the addition of screens at two of the major mosques, the construction of corbelled arch portals and the limited number of *namāzgāhs/īdgāhs* does not mask the fact that the majority of mosques built in the early period have a strongly indigenous Indic aesthetic. Even after the period of reuse of temple components had passed, columns, lintels and corbelled domes were newly carved in the same tradition – especially in the case of the mosques built in the fourteenth century in the major coastal towns of Gujarat such as Cambay, Baroch and Mangrol.<sup>55</sup>

Despite the broadly Turkic moniker being applicable to the occupiers of both regions, one drew more from the Seljuq building tradition while the other was rooted in a distinctively Ghurid architectural aesthetic. The wholesale adoption of many elements of the indigenous Indian architectural aesthetic and medium led to the emergence of a more coherent, cohesive, and distinctive Islamic aesthetic somewhat sooner than was the case in Anatolia. There, a more haphazard combination of stone and brick elements, often in the same buildings, continued well into the thirteenth century, before a more coherent and identifiably Anatolian Islamic architectural aesthetic finally emerged.

52 See McClary, *Rum Seljuq Architecture*, 39-62 for a study of the Sivas Great mosque minaret.

53 See *ibid.*, 91-178 for a study of the complex.

54 See McClary, “The Re-use of Byzantine Spolia,” 15-18.

55 See Alka Patel, *Building Communities in Gujarāt: Architecture and Society during the Twelfth through Fourteenth Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), especially 129-64. In the later period, areas formerly reserved for figural decoration were generally replaced in newly carved elements with the *ratna* (rhomboid jewel) design. Flood, *Objects of Translation*, 171, fig. 104 shows a defaced figural element on an upper column in the Adhai din ka Jhompara mosque in Ajmer, which has been reworked to resemble a *ratna*. This shows that the desire to replace the figural carvings with *ratna* designs was in place from the very earliest period of construction of mosques with temple spolia in India.

One of the consequences of the shift from brick to stone, even for the same structural form, is that despite the gain in precision possible with stone there is often a corresponding loss to the sense of mass of the structure.<sup>56</sup> This may be why a far greater interest in the external façade of stone buildings developed in Anatolia than can be seen in their brick-built antecedents in the Iranian world.<sup>57</sup> In contrast, the addition of large stone screens at the interface of the courtyard and the prayer hall in both the Quwwat al-Islam mosque in Delhi and the Adhai din ka Jhompara mosque in Ajmer had a different effect. The screens retained the internal focus of the major decorative and overtly Islamic architectonic element of the buildings, and can be seen as an attempt to create the effect of one of the four internal courtyard façades seen in the brick-built four-iwan mosque courtyards built under Turko-Muslim dynasties across the wider Iranian world in the preceding centuries. It remains unclear why there was no attempt to replicate the same form, on a smaller scale, on the other three sides.

Further research into the slightly later developments, especially in Gujarat and the Deccan, alongside study of the brick monuments of Bengal, could add greater nuance to our understanding of the development of a distinctively Indian form of Islamic architecture in the Sultanate period. Although the process did not go full circle, in the following centuries under the Mughals the style of bulbous dome developed in brick under the Timurids in Central Asia was introduced into India, but in marble instead of baked brick sheathed in glazed tiles. This process reached its apotheosis with the construction of the dome of the Taj Mahal in Agra, flanked by entirely Indian *chattris*.

Although there is a vast geographical distance between Anatolia and India, both regions are on the, albeit opposite, peripheries of the Persianate world, and were brought into that milieu by Turkic conquerors at about the same time. Through this overview of the contemporaneous developments in the two regions, it can be seen that it was not merely the parallel historical circumstances of Anatolia and India that resulted in close similarities in the expression of aspects of material culture but also the existence of a common vocabulary of power shared by each region's political elites.

<sup>56</sup> Hillenbrand, "Brick versus Stone," 115.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid. Rare exceptions include the façades of the Ribat-i Malik near Bukhara and the Shah-i Mashhad madrasa in Gharjistan.

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## The Jami Masjid *Mihrāb* of Bijapur: Inscribing Turkic Identities in a Contested Space

*Sara Mondini*

During the period when Bahmani power (1347-1527) in the Deccan was in decline, the Adilshahi rulers (1489-1686) established their capital city at Bijapur,<sup>1</sup> in the modern state of Karnataka, and became advocates for an intensive and remarkable artistic development which was to make their court one of the most vital and important centres of this period, even beyond the Deccan. Although the Adilshahis artistically excelled in many different fields, through an intensive building programme they promoted the development of an architectural style which remains controversial and remarkable, both for its high-quality execution and for the variety of artistic vocabularies which it employs. As with other Indo-Islamic regional styles, the architectural production of the Adilshahi dynasty has often been neglected as merely a forerunner to Mughal architecture.<sup>2</sup> However, several features and architectural models emerged under their rule which were subsequently developed, or even assimilated, after the annexation of these “peripheral” districts by the new empire, while other elements remain strikingly unique models in the Indo-Islamic context.

As demonstrated by previous researches, the artistic and architectural productions of the region, similarly to those of other areas of the Indian subcontinent, not only seem to reflect the religious, social and political complexity of a protean society but are also characterised by the role of Central Asian and Iranian models. While their wide range of artistic influences and the restoration that they have undergone often make it difficult to recognise their precise origins, their role, the way they reshaped the local production, and – even if frequently elusive in the case of the Deccan – the different “weights” exercised through the centuries by the diverse Turkic patrons and their taste in steering and prompting artistic development remain crucial.

<sup>1</sup> The city is today officially known as Vijayapura.

<sup>2</sup> The artistic evidence, which is the result of contacts between the Mughals and the Adilshahi dynasty, is generally regarded as being detectable nearly exclusively in painting, and mainly in the works commissioned from 1623 onwards (the year of the alliance between the Mughal empire and Bijapur, which marked the end of the sultanate of Ahmadnagar).



Despite recent research and renewed attention focusing on Deccani territory and Adilshahi artistic production,<sup>3</sup> various monuments are still in need of more in-depth surveys,<sup>4</sup> while the peculiarities of their processes of patronage have yet to be carefully investigated. The purpose of this contribution is to attempt to describe and interpret the decoration on the “new” Jami Masjid in the capital city. This will include a study of its historical context and the social composition of the court in the period during which the mosque and its *miḥrāb* were built and decorated. I will consider both the *miḥrāb*'s design and the motifs of its pictorial decorations on the one hand, and the epigraphic programme and its meaning in relation to the social and religious context of the city and the role of the diverse Turkic elites on the other.<sup>5</sup> The interpretation of inscriptions, decorative motifs and formal elements in relation to the context in which they were conceived can in fact shed light on the identities of the monuments' patrons, thus helping to trace the complexity of a Turkic presence in Bijapur and the Deccan.

## 1 Cultural Encounters

The Adilshahis were great patrons of the arts and builders who adorned their capital with a large number of monuments which were of remarkable value,

3 In this connection, see particularly the exhibitions organised at the Metropolitan Museum of New York, the various conferences held during the last decades on the topic and the published proceedings, together with the results of the most recent surveys and research; Navina Najat Haidar and Marika Sardar (eds), *Sultans of the South: Arts of India's Deccan Courts, 1323-1687* (New York, NY: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2011); Navina Najat Haidar and Marika Sardar (eds), *Sultans of Deccan India, 1500-1700: Opulence and Fantasy* (New York, NY: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2015); Laura E. Parodi (ed.), *The Visual World of Muslim India: The Art, Culture and Society of the Deccan in the Early Modern Era* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2014); Deborah Hutton, *Art of the Court of Bijapur* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2006); Helen Philon, *Gulbarga, Bidar, Bijapur* (Mumbai: Pictor Publishing, 2012).

4 We could think of the two Bahmani capitals, Gulbarga and Bidar, that have between them more than fifty complexes and single buildings, of which only the most important have been studied carefully. For some of the remaining monuments we have mere descriptions while the majority of mausoleums have never been exhaustively analysed. Ahmadnagar and Berar too have been object of modern researches and studies that still wait to be fully published. If the monuments of Bijapur have received closer attention, some of them still need exhaustive analysis – among them, for example, the *miḥrāb* of the Jami Masjid, the object of the present contribution, the Mecca Masjid or the small mosque and mausoleum dedicated to the Abyssinian Yāqūt Dābuli.

5 Part of the results of this research was presented at the 2nd International Seminar on “Telangana through Ages, Perspectives from Early and Medieval Period”, 19 and 20 January 2018 in Hyderabad (Telangana).

from both a structural and decorative point of view. The complex social and political background of the Deccan, and particularly of the Bijapuri court during this period, has been described as an ideal framework for cultural and artistic “syncretism”, whereby architectural techniques, models and decorative schemes from various sources coalesced into a harmonious whole. As re-stated by Deborah Hutton, the idea of syncretism would move by the assumption that the coming together of artistic traditions was extraordinary, an exception to the existence of a tradition in a sort of “pure” state. Nevertheless, this purity could not be further from the medieval and early modern South Asian and Bijapuri scenario, whose salient features were often the result of cultural interactions and exchanges.<sup>6</sup> In the Deccani context, Bijapur in fact represents a new step in the formation of an autonomous regional style and in the development of its distinctive forms. After the migration of formal elements from northern India to Gulbarga during the early Bahmani period, a renewed and deeper openness to Central Asian models characterised Bijapuri architecture.<sup>7</sup> This trend seems to have been foreshadowed to some extent by the architectural production of Bidar, which opened up to new forms that were soon assimilated and redeployed. Confirmation of the beginning of this new phase may be found in the scholarly debate about Bidar’s architecture, which has led art historians to speak of an embryonic phase of Deccani architecture.<sup>8</sup> Rather than a period marked by a scant originality, it seems more appropriate to describe this as a phase marked by the preliminary assimilation of new formal elements that were destined to reach a more elegant and lavish maturity in Bijapur.<sup>9</sup> It is only Adilshahi art that fully demonstrates the maturity of this rich weave of artistic models.

Persian elements, both Timurid and Safavid, seem predominant in Bijapur architecture. The dome profiles of all the monuments largely seem to be of Persian derivation, and the same is often true of the decorative details, elevations and plans. However, in its design the architectural production shows an interesting mixture of decorative and structural elements borrowed from the Syrian, Byzantine, Egyptian and Indian worlds, and the echo of the Turkic

6 Hutton, *Art of the Court of Bijapur*, 19.

7 Bianca Maria Alfieri, *Architettura Islamica del Subcontinente Indiano* (Lugano: Edizioni Arte e Moneta, 1994), 142; Hutton, *Art of the Court of Bijapur*, 1-25; Sara Mondini, “Turkic Influences through the Indian Subcontinent,” in Géza Dávid and Ibolya Gerelyes (eds), *Thirteenth International Congress of Turkish art: proceedings, 3-7 September 2007 Budapest* (Budapest: Hungarian National Museum, 2009), 481-4.

8 See, for example, George Michell and Mark Zebrowski, *Architecture and Art of the Deccan Sultanates* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 268-9.

9 Alfieri, *Architettura Islamica del Subcontinente Indiano*, 131-7; Mondini, “Turkic Influences through the Indian Subcontinent,” 480-4.

world or even of Ottoman models.<sup>10</sup> According to the historian Firishta (d. 1623) the Adilshahis' "special attitude" towards the Ottoman model derived primarily from the Ottoman origins of the dynasty. He attests in fact a direct descent of Yusūf 'Ādil Khān (r. 1489-1510), the founder of the Adilshahis, from Murad II (r. 1421-51) – he would have been the brother of Mehmed II (r. 1451-81), responsible for the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople. Saved from the death sentence demanded by his brother, he would have reached India through the caravanned roads and here he probably contributed to the flourishing of Ottoman models. Unfortunately, even if assumed by many art historians, the work of Firishta as annalist of the Muslim sultanates of the Deccan is not considered a reliable source and the history of the Ottoman origins of Yusūf 'Ādil Khān is given as "the best of his tales".<sup>11</sup> A contemporary of Firishta, Rafī' al-Dīn Shīrāzī (c. 1540-after 1620), narrates instead that Yusūf 'Ādil Khān was born within the Aqqoyunlu and forced to flee by the twilight of his family's rule. Even though the tales of the Ottoman or Aqqoyunlu origins of the dynasty's founder as explanation for his "special attitude" towards the Ottoman and Turkic models does not seem reliable,<sup>12</sup> it is likely that both the Turkic and the Ottoman world exerted a powerful pull on Adilshahi artistic production.<sup>13</sup>

The mastery of exact planning and the building of arches and vaults is surprising, considering the discrepancy between structure and decoration, which, in some cases, is quite considerable. The decorations feature numerous Hindu

10 Muhammad Abdul Nayeem, *External Relations of the Bijapur Kingdom (1489-1686 AD) A Study in Diplomatic History* (Hyderabad, India: Bright Publishers, 1974), 71-2; Hermann Goetz, "The Ottoman-Turkish Architecture in Bijapur. The Architect of the Gol Gumbaz at Bijapur," in P.M. Joshi and Muhammad Abdul Nayeem (eds), *Studies in the Foreign Relationship of India, from the Earliest Time to 1947* (Hyderabad, India: State Archives Government of Andhra Pradesh, 1975), 522-6; Elizabeth Schotten Merklinger, "Possible Seljuq Influence on the Dome of the Gol Gumbad in Bijāpūr," *East and West* 28/1 (1978), 257-61.

11 As regards the legendary origins of the founder of the dynasty, see in particular Muhammad Qasim Firishta, *Tarikh-i Firishta*, translated by John Briggs under the title *History of the Rise of Mahomedan Power in India, till the year AD 1612, Vol. III* (New Delhi: Adam Publishers and Distributors, 2006), 1-18; Peter Hardy, "Firishta," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*<sup>2</sup> (Leiden: Brill, 1960-2005); Ismail Hikmet Ertaylan, *Ādilshāhiler. Hindistanda Bir Türk-Islām Devleti* (Istanbul: Sermet Matbaasi, 1953); Subrahmanyam, quoting Aubin, remarks how the founder of the Bijapur sultanate, Yusūf 'Ādil Khān would have been brought to the Deccan by an Iranian merchant, who had been sent out to the Persian Gulf by Maḥmūd Shah Bahmani to procure *ghulāms*: Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Iranians Abroad: Intra-Asian Elite Migration and Early Modern State Formation," *Journal of Asian Studies* 51/2 (1992), 343.

12 Roy S. Fischel, "Origin Narratives, Legitimacy, and the Practice of Cosmopolitan Language in the Early Modern Deccan, India," *Purushartha* 33 (2015), 71-95.

13 Mondini, "Turkic Influences through the Indian Subcontinent," 481.

elements of remarkable craftsmanship,<sup>14</sup> foremost among them the heavy *chhajjās* supported by sinuous brackets.<sup>15</sup> Thus, it appears to be possible to identify the two main skills involved in the realisation of the Adilshahi monuments, namely their perfect execution at the hands of local masons on the one hand and a crucial knowledge of building planning on the other, which in some cases may arguably be attributed to the assistance of foreign architects.<sup>16</sup> Collaboration of this kind would fit well with what we know about the dynamics of patronage and the execution of artworks in the Mughal court, with foreign architects often working in close collaboration with the sultans to meet their aspirations of grandeur, while entrusting Hindu masons with the actual execution of the work.<sup>17</sup> Finally, while the strongly “Hindu connotation” of shapes and details comes across as rather unusual, the successful fusion and integration of these components prevents them from clashing with the Persian and Central Asian vocabularies, and allows them to become an integral part of a distinctive architectural style.

## 2 The Historical and Socio-Political Context

The complex social, political and religious background of the Deccan during this period is quite clear. The social fabric was principally constituted by Hindus and *dakhnīs* (or “old-comers”, the “Deccani”, the long-established immigrants of Arab, Turkic or Afghan origins from the Delhi sultanate, and their descendants – generally Sunnis), together with a considerable number of Abyssinians whose importance continuously grew thanks to the phenomenon of slave mobility.<sup>18</sup> We know that the *āfāqīs* (or “newcomers”, the new class of

14 See, for example, George Michell, “Indic Themes in the Design and Decoration of the Ibrahim Rauza in Bijapur,” in Navina Najat Haidar and Marika Sardar (eds), *Sultans of the South: Arts of India's Deccan Courts, 1323-1687* (New York, NY: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2011), 236-51.

15 The term *chhajjās* refers to projecting or overhanging eaves, usually supported by large carved brackets, which are a typical element of Indo-Islamic architecture.

16 Goetz, “Ottoman-Turkish Architecture in Bijapur,” 522-6.

17 In this connection, see, for example, M. Abdullah Chaghtai, “A Family of Great Mughal Architects,” in Monica Juneja (ed.), *Architecture in Medieval India: Forms, Contexts, Histories* (Delhi: Permanent Black, 2001), 279-89.

18 There are a few good studies that analyse the presence and importance of Abyssinians in the Deccani region, both from a historico-socio-political and from an artistic point of view – among them, Richard Maxwell Eaton, “The Rise and Fall of Military Slavery in the Deccan, 1450-1650,” in Indrani Chatterjee and Richard Maxwell Eaton (eds), *Slavery & South Asian History* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2006), 115-35; Kenneth X. Robbins and John McCleod (eds), *African Elites in India: Habshi Amarat* (Ahmedabad:

immigrants coming from Central Asia and Iran – generally Shi‘ites)<sup>19</sup> also gained crucial importance within the Bijapuri court,<sup>20</sup> as had been the case in the last phase of the Bahmanis,<sup>21</sup> and played an important role in the external relations of the dynasty.

This extremely variegated composition of the population must have facilitated the continuous changes in the rulers’ religious orientations, and consequently in their cultural and artistic tendencies.<sup>22</sup> It appears, in fact, that one of the most complex aspects of the policies and culture adopted by the Adilshahi dynasty was its religion. Like the Ottomans, some Adilshahi rulers were Sunni, owing allegiance to the Rightly Guided Caliphs (*al-khulafā’*)

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Mapin Publishing, 2006), 30-123; Shanti Sadiq Ali, *The African Dispersal in the Deccan: From Medieval to Modern Times* (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1996); Richard M. Eaton, *The New Cambridge History of India 1:8, A Social History of the Deccan 1300-1761, Eight Indian Lives* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 109-40.

- 19 Haroon Sherwani considers it incorrect to translate *āfāqīs* with the term “foreigners”, as proposed by Wolseley Haig. Equally inaccurate is the definition of *āfāqīs* as “travellers” as occurs in some recent publications on the Deccan. Despite their Persian and Central Asian origins, these migrants, or new settlers, elected the Deccan as their new land – thus, Sherwani prefers to define them as “newcomers” in opposition to the *dakhnīs*, or “old-comers”. Agreeing with Sherwani, in the present contribution the original *dakhnīs* and *āfāqīs* have been translated as “old-comers” and “newcomers” or, by adopting the translations proposed by Franco Coslovi, *mulkī* and *ghayr-mulkī* (“locals” and “non-locals”); Haroon Khan Sherwani, *The Bahmanis of the Deccan* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1985), 131-4; Franco Coslovi, “La Genesi dei Gruppi Mulki e Ghayr-Mulki nel Deccan Bahmanide: Il ruolo di Sultan Ahmad Wali Bahmani,” in Bianca Scarcia Amoretti (ed.), *Sguardi sulla cultura Sciita nel Deccan/Glances on the Shi‘ite Deccan Culture. Rivista degli Studi Orientali* 64, no.1/2 (1990), 97-121.
- 20 Richard Maxwell Eaton, *Sufis of Bijapur 1330-1700, Social Roles of Sufis in Medieval India* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978), 70-1.
- 21 The opposition between the *dakhnīs* and *āfāqīs* (old-comers/newcomers) within the Bahmani sultanate and its socio-religious and political consequences have been analysed by various scholars. For an exhaustive overview, see Sherwani, *Bahmanis of the Deccan*, 122-6, 133-5; Coslovi, “La Genesi dei Gruppi Mulki e Ghayr-Mulki nel Deccan Bahmanide”, 97-121; Haroon Khan Sherwani, “Sufi-State Relationship under the Bahmanids (AD 1348-1538),” in Bianca Scarcia Amoretti (ed.), *Sguardi sulla cultura Sciita nel Deccan/Glances on the Shi‘ite Deccan Culture. Rivista degli Studi Orientali* 64, no.1/2 (1990), 71-96; Umar Khalidi, “The Shi‘ites of the Deccan: An Introduction,” in Bianca Scarcia Amoretti (ed.), *Sguardi sulla cultura Sciita nel Deccan/Glances on the Shi‘ite Deccan Culture. Rivista degli Studi Orientali* 64, no.1/2 (1990), 5-16; Subrahmanyam, “Iranians Abroad,” 340-63; Eaton, *Social History of the Deccan*, 59-77. Nevertheless, there are still unanswered questions concerning the perception and identity of these social groups during the reigns that arose after the Bahmani decline. See Sara Mondini, “Vague Traits: Strategy and Ambiguities in the Decorative Program of the Aḥmad Šāh I Bahmani Mausoleum,” in Stefano Pellò (ed.), *Borders: Itineraries on the Edges of Iran* (Venice: Edizioni Ca’ Foscari, 2016), 171.
- 22 Eaton, *Sufis of Bijapur*, 70-1; Hutton, *Art of the Court of Bijapur*, 13-25.

*al-rāshidūn*) and following the Hanafī *madhhab*. Nevertheless, some sovereigns wavered in their religious stances. As Muhammad Nayeem attests, the founder of the dynasty, Yusūf Ādil Khān (r. 1489-1510), is a case in point, as he had the *khuṭba*, the Friday sermon, pronounced alternately according to Sunni and Shi'ite fashion. This was probably due to his reluctance to declare Bijapur a Shi'ite state despite his allegiance to the Safavid house.<sup>23</sup> As a great admirer and patron of learning, who invited great poets and scholars from abroad to his court, he seems to have adopted an impartial attitude towards the Sunnis, thus cultivating the right atmosphere for artistic development.<sup>24</sup>

To judge from historical events, it is likely that this climate did not always remain so ideal under the sultans who followed after him. Even among historians there is not always complete agreement on the religious orientation professed by various sovereigns during the different phases of the kingdom. While during its first decades the kingdom seems to have been ruled as a Shi'ite state, reflecting the social composition of the court dominated by the Central Asian and Iranian Shi'ite party,<sup>25</sup> subsequently, through the adoption of a new political and religious course, the dynasty's points of reference were constantly changing, with new sources of inspiration in the cultural, political and religious spheres being sought abroad, chiefly in the Safavid and Ottoman empires. Only at the end of Adilshahi rule does this allegiance seem to have been definitely transferred to the Mughals, just before the annexation by Aurangzeb (r. 1658-1707) in 1686. This attitude, and the reorientations of the dynasty, probably had substantial consequences for their artistic taste and propensity for experimentation.

The diplomatic relations of the Adilshahis were probably a channel through which external models and trends reached the court. Despite the fact that initially no diplomatic contacts are attested between Bijapur and the Ottomans, the Adilshahis chose to display the crescent as their royal emblem on all the public buildings of the capital, as illustrated by the new Jami Masjid (1576 or 1578).<sup>26</sup> This ascendancy would seem to stand in clear contrast to Shi'ite symbols, which in some cases appear on the exterior façades or inner walls of

23 "He was Shi'ite at heart and owed allegiance to the Safavid house." Nayeem, *External Relations of the Bijapur Kingdom*, 73-4.

24 *Ibid.*, 21.

25 Eaton, *Sufis of Bijapur*, 67.

26 Nayeem, *External Relations of the Bijapur Kingdom*, 74; from an inscription in Henry Cousens, *Bijāpūr and Its Architectural Remains. With an Historical Outline of the Ādil Shāhi Dynasty* (New Delhi: Archaeological Survey of India, 1996), 59-60; Eaton, *Sufis of Bijapur*, 86. Hutton indicates that the mosque was begun in 1568, Hutton, *Art of the Court of Bijapur*, 36-40.

monuments, in inscriptions or as decorative elements.<sup>27</sup> Although we cannot always rely on specific evidence, most diplomatic contacts would appear to have concerned Iran. However, cultural relations were established with the Ottomans<sup>28</sup> and with other Islamic dynasties in Asia and Africa. It is reasonable to suppose that commercial exchanges were flourishing, especially thanks to the movement of traders, travelers and pilgrims visiting the holy cities. As Nayeem's work on the external relations of the kingdom suggests, the sultanate was a "theocratic, multiracial and dynastic state ruled by a Persian-Turkish elite, but enriched by the presence of Central Asian ethnicities, Arabs"<sup>29</sup> and Abyssinians, as well as the local Hindu population.

All the multifaceted features and aspects of Bijapuri culture and art undoubtedly contributed to shaping Adilshahi architecture, one of the chosen fields for their patronage. This is particularly the case with certain striking monuments in Bijapur, which became a kind of mirror reflecting the extraordinary contributions from this complex background. In this sense, the ambitious decorative programme of the Bijapuri Jami Masjid's *mīhrāb*, with its astonishing paintings and inscriptions, must be seen as an eloquent declaration of religious identity and as an instrument of political propaganda, the analysis of which allow us to trace its sources of inspiration and to reconstruct the originality and richness of its meanings.

### 3 The Artistic Medium

The present Jami Masjid of the capital city (see Figure 9.1), with the sumptuous decoration of its *mīhrāb*, appears to embody and attest to the complex social and religious environments described above. Commissioned by 'Alī Ḳādilshāh (r. 1558-80) in 1576 or 1578, the mosque remains one of the most iconic buildings of Bijapur, and probably of the entire Deccan, and despite never being completed it reflected the new exigencies of the capital's growing population and the sovereign-patron's ambitions.<sup>30</sup> Its construction, as with other contemporary monumental works, was possible only due to an influx of artisans,

27 James Allan, *The Art and the Architecture of the Twelver Shi'ism: Iraq, Iran and the Indian Sub-Continent* (London: Azimuth Editions, 2012), 63-70.

28 Nayeem, *External Relations of the Bijapur Kingdom*, 21.

29 *Ibid.*, 19-21.

30 Cousens, *Bijāpūr and Its Architectural Remains*, 57-61; Hutton, *Art of the Court of Bijapur*, 37-41.



FIGURE 9.1 Jami Masjid of 'Alī I 'Ādilshāh, Bijapur

masons, and stonecutters into the capital city, contributing to the formation of a new urban proletariat.<sup>31</sup>

With a 150-by-80 metre footprint, the Jami Masjid remains one of the largest religious structures of the region, and came to replace the previous Bijapuri congregational mosque, the Jami Masjid of Sultan Ibrāhīm I (r. 1535-58), which had been built twenty-six years before on a far smaller scale (see Figure 9.2).<sup>32</sup> Together with this previous structure, the new Jami Masjid was at the centre of the socio-political and religious tensions that marked the history of Bijapur during the following centuries. The work of Muhammad Zubairi and the studies carried out by Richard Eaton are thus crucial to understand its importance and the symbolism of its decoration.<sup>33</sup>

While during the reign of Ibrāhīm I (r. 1535-58) Sunnism had been established as the state religion, reflecting the growing influence of Deccanis (*dakhnīs*) in Bijapur, it was not until the accession of 'Alī I (r. 1558-80) that the Shi'a newcomers (*āfāqīs*) vigorously reasserted their former hegemony.

31 Eaton, *Sufis of Bijapur*, 86.

32 Ibid., 86, particularly note 11; Cousens, *Bijāpūr and Its Architectural Remains*, 57; Henry Cousens, *Bijapur. The Old Capital of the Adil Shahi Kings. A Guide to its Ruins with Historical Outline* (Pune: Phillips & Co., Orphanage Press, 1889), 63.

33 Muhammad Ibrahim Zubairi, *Basatin al-Salatin* (Hyderabad, India: Saiyidi Press, 1892-93); Eaton, *Sufis of Bijapur*.





FIGURE 9.2 Jami Masjid of Sultan Ibrāhīm I, Bijapur © British Library Board Photo 1003/ (1821)

However, this only occurred after a dramatic armed clash in which *āfāqīs* laid siege to Bijapur's old Jami Masjid, which had been fortified by Sunni Deccanis (see Figure 9.2). The Deccanis held out so long that 'Alī finally yielded and allowed the mosque to remain a Sunni preserve. Thereafter, during 'Alī's reign not only was the Friday sermon (*khutba*) read in the Shi'ite form but 3,000 Shi'as were employed to revile the first three caliphs by publicly cursing their names in the court, through the streets and in the bazaars.<sup>34</sup>

Ibrāhīm II (r. 1580-1627), who succeeded to the throne, was a Sunni of the most liberal sort, and subsequently a tolerant and eclectic atmosphere prevailed in Bijapur by the turn of the seventeenth century.<sup>35</sup> This, together with the crucial role played by some Abyssinian slaves, allowed the Deccani class to entrench themselves in positions that the class of newcomers would never again recover.<sup>36</sup>

It is thus easy to understand how, from this moment on, the new Jami Masjid became a symbol of the renewed Sunni orientation of the dynasty, chosen

34 Eaton, *Sufis of Bijapur*, 67-68, particularly notes 67 and 68.

35 Ibid., 71.

36 Ibid., 70.

and perceived as a bastion for the most orthodox Sunnites. This status was further confirmed during the following decades when it found itself at the centre of the conflict between the Sunni ‘*ulamā*’ and the Sufis, who were soon also involved as active protagonists in the Shi‘a–Sunni enmity. We might consider the classic example of Shah Šibghat Allāh (d. 1606), a Shattari Sufi who, while standing before the Jami Masjid on Friday,<sup>37</sup> launched his puritanical exhortations at the Shi‘ites but also at the sovereign and his worldly pursuits, or to the exponents of Sufism installed at Shahpur Hillock who refused to go to the Jami Masjid for their regular prayers, symbolically refusing to submit to the city’s ‘*ulamā*’.<sup>38</sup>

As Hutton notes, if we consider the artistic vocabulary that was chosen, the hypostyle plan of the new Jami Masjid is atypical compared with other mosques, even contemporaneous ones, which were built in the city. Instead of a three-to-six bay sanctuary opening on the front with arcades, the Jami Masjid consists of a wide courtyard with a central cistern for the ablutions, at which point the prayer hall opens with its nine aisles and five bays.<sup>39</sup> The plan is comparable with the Iranian hypostyle-plan models, but in terms of dimensions and general conception the Deccani building seems to manifest different ambitions (see Figure 9.3).<sup>40</sup> Besides its exceptional dimensions, the sobriety of its interior and its essentialist decorative scheme, mainly limited to plasterwork, seem to impress solemnity on the constructed space. The only exception is represented by the *mihrāb*, which boasts astonishingly rich decoration, clashing with the general conception of the building and capturing the attention of the visitor (see Figure 9.4).

37 “Šibghat Allāh announced that it was no longer possible to offer prayers in Bijapur as long as the sultan followed his worldly pursuits. He then declared that the selling of wine must be prohibited, as should the practice of prostitution, and that Shi‘as should be barred from all positions of power in the kingdom.” Eaton states that the Šibghat’s anti-Shi‘a convictions probably originated in the polarised sectarian climate that characterised Gujarat, but it is not clear if his sentiments stemmed from the pro-Sunni positions of the Shattari order or were personal views. What is clear is that at the time of Ibrāhīm II (r. 1580–1627) the bloody history of Shi‘a–Sunni enmity was still far from resolved. Eaton, *Sufis of Bijapur*, 112–18, particularly 115.

38 *Ibid.*, 253.

39 Hutton, *Art of the Court of Bijapur*, 37–8.

40 The fusion of elements and architectural vocabularies which appears in the Jami Masjid at Bijapur seems to be ascribable to the extraordinary cultural encounters that characterised the seventeenth century, following what Goetz defines as the “revolution in Dakhni civilisation”; Hermann Goetz, “The Fall of Vijayanagar and the Nationalization of Muslim Art in the Dakhan,” *Journal of Indian History* 19/2 (1940), 251; Eaton, *Sufis of Bijapur*, 93–6.



FIGURE 9.3 Jami Masjid of 'Alī I 'Ādilshāh, Bijapur: prayer hall and *qibla* wall

In a comparison with the broader architectural landscape of Bijapur, the mosque's sobriety, together with its still essentially Iranian taste, appears to contrast with the later assimilation, from the opening of Ibrāhīm II's reign onwards, of a growing number of decorative Hindu elements masterfully integrated within the Indo-Islamic vocabulary. In this connection, Eaton, on the basis of Hermann Goetz's research, remarks that the reign of 'Alī I did not bring any major innovation in the artistic field but rather slavishly copied architectural models inherited from the Middle East. According to Eaton and Goetz, the eventual opening towards local production, and the consequent acquisition of models, resulted from Bijapur's growing isolation from the Safavid world, whose cultural models had until that moment inspired and deeply conditioned the Deccani patrons – as they were to continue to inspire the Mughal emperors during the following centuries. The Portuguese presence in the Indian Ocean prevented deeper contacts between the Deccani sultanates and the Persian Gulf by their control of the Konkani coast, while the Mughals already dominated the land route through northern India. This isolation must have contributed on the one hand to diminishing the power and importance of the Deccani *āfāqīs*, and on the other to diminishing the models coming from the Persianate world, inducing the Deccani sultans and patrons to turn to the local artistic and architectonic traditions in their search for new sources of

inspiration.<sup>41</sup> According to Goetz, a second possible cause was the eventual migration to Bijapur of a significant portion of the Vijayanagara population after the destruction of the Hindu capital between 1565 and 1567, when artists and craftsmen probably moved to the Adilshahis' court, bringing their artistic vocabulary with them.<sup>42</sup>

Despite the plausibility of both theories, we should not forget how similar assimilation processes of local elements are to be identified during other artistic and historical phases. We might consider, for example, the architecture patronised by Fīrūz Shāh (r. 1397-1422), the eighth sovereign of the Bahmani dynasty, or the later and better-known architecture patronised by the Mughal emperor Akbar (r. 1556-1605). Investigating the historical circumstances, the religious and political dynamics that accompanied such phenomena, it is rather probable that they were the results of concurrent causes and of phases of artistic experimentation conditioned, or favoured, by their contemporary socio-cultural and political context, and by the personal profiles and attitudes of their patrons. A further cause of the renewed artistic vitality that dominated the Bijapuri landscape can be identified in the cultural opening and liberal inclination under the new sovereign, Ibrāhīm II 'Ādilshāh (r. 1580-1627),<sup>43</sup> who was distinguished for his unceasing artistic patronage and for the quality of the works of art that he patronised. The sixth sultan of the dynasty undoubtedly played a predominant role in promoting the artistic flourishing of the period. He was a man of culture and an expert musician with a deep knowledge of and passion for music, religion and art, who welcomed countless sages, poets, philosophers and artists to his court, including members of the Hindu elite. His open attitude encompassed both the artistic field and the religious one, to such an extent that he was considered virtually a heretic by the firmly orthodox.

The atmosphere which characterised the reign of Ibrāhīm II seems to have been only partially confirmed during the reign of his successor to the throne, his son Muḥammad 'Ādilshāh (r. 1627-56). He was, as the evidence suggests, responsible for patronising the paintings which adorn the *mihrāb* of the Jami Masjid and appears to have maintained a Sunni religious orientation – but less liberal than his father – favouring the *dakhnīs* rather than the *āfāqīs*, and he would have continued to support the artistic development of the city.<sup>44</sup>

41 Eaton, *Sufis of Bijapur*, 95-7; Goetz, "Fall of Vijayanagar," 255.

42 Goetz, "Fall of Vijayanagar," 252-5.

43 Ibrāhīm II's interest in the arts is confirmed by his promoting changing the name Vijayanpur (from Sanskrit, "City of Victory", a variation of Bijapur) to Vidyapur (lit. "City of Learning"); Eaton, *Sufis of Bijapur*, 97.

44 Hutton, *Art of the Court of Bijapur*, 121.



FIGURE 9.4 Jami Masjid of 'Alī I 'Ādilshāh, Bijapur: *mihrāb*

#### 4 The Jami Masjid *Mihrāb*

In light of all these premises concerning the historical, socio-political, religious and artistic contexts, it is to the *mihrāb* of the Jami Masjid and the interpretation of its decoration that our attention now turns. As is revealed by an inscription, the painted decoration adorning the niche does not appear to be contemporary with the foundation of the building. It was, as mentioned, a later addition, dating to around 1636,<sup>45</sup> ascribable to the reign of Muḥammad 'Ādilshāh (r. 1627-56). It has been established that it was during the reign of Muḥammad that painting attained a pinnacle of development. Several of the monuments that he patronised still reveal considerable remains of paintings, often forming the greater part of their decorative scheme.<sup>46</sup> However, the subject depicted on the niche of the large *mihrāb* of the Jami Masjid appears to be decidedly unusual. In and around the *mihrāb*, on the largest blind arch, an ar-

45 Cousens, *Bijāpūr and Its Architectural Remains*, 59-60; Hutton, *Art of the Court of Bijapur*, 38.

46 We might consider, for example, the paintings in the Asar Mahal, in the Sat Manzil and also the frescoes in the Kumatgi pavilion; Cousens, *Bijāpūr and Its Architectural Remains*, 60, 63-6, 89-95; Hutton, *Art of the Court of Bijapur*, 71, 116; Mark Brand, "Bijapur under the 'Adil Shahi (1490-1686)," in Helen Philon (ed.), *Silent Splendour. Palaces of the Deccan, 14th-19th Centuries* (Mumbai: Marg Publications, 2010), 66-77.

chitectural structure is depicted in detail, with minarets, arches, domes, medallions and other decorative elements in gold and blue, and enriched by an articulated programme of inscriptions (see Figure 9.5). In his report, Henry Cousens, who was among the first to describe this work of art, identified “tombs and minarets, censers and chains, niches containing books, vases with flowers and the whole is interspersed with bands and medallions bearing decorative inscriptions”, but he read and reported only a small portion of the epigraphic bands.<sup>47</sup>

The unique nature of the *mihrāb*'s decorative scheme, not only within the Deccani scene but also in the whole of Indo-Islamic production, makes its interpretation even more difficult. Cousens's description, beyond being quite vague, seems to clash with what we know about the role and the importance of the *mihrāb* in Islamic architecture. It is known that panels with similar decorations, despite their extreme rarity in the Indian subcontinent, are widespread in other Islamic regions, with extant examples in Turkey and Tunisia.<sup>48</sup> The reproduction of architectural elements in those cases was generally realised on the tiles that were used to bedeck *mihrābs* or, more frequently, decorate the interior of houses and palaces, but the depiction of tomb structures on the main *mihrāb* of the congregational mosque of a capital city remains unusual and is not easy to understand. In light of these considerations it is thus quite hard to establish fruitful comparisons, both in terms of conception and style.

Nevertheless, the architectural style of the structures depicted on the Jami Masjid *mihrāb* remains unequivocally Bijapuri, and can be ascribed to the local contemporary style. Its connection to the Adilshahi artistic vocabulary is clearly recognisable thanks to the abundance of details in the representation, in the rendering of the bulbous domes, the rings of petals that embrace the bases of the domes, the slender minarets and their profiles and in the reproduction of the arches' extradoses – all of which are typical elements of the Bijapuri architectural style.

Such a high level of precision and accuracy of representation seem to confirm the analysis made by Elizabeth Lambourn. We could identify the *mihrāb*

47 Cousens, *Bijāpūr and Its Architectural Remains*, 59; idem, *Bijapur: The Old Capital of the Adil Shahi Kings*, 23-4.

48 We might think of the Qallaline tile panels, developed in North Africa between the sixteenth and the twentieth centuries, which, despite their different style, present architectural decorations conceptually very similar to the Jami Masjid *mihrāb* and were also installed in mosques; or, again, of some tile panels from Iznik (dated to the seventeenth century) that used to decorate private houses and which, in representing the Masjid al-Haram of Mecca, combine frontal and aerial views of the mosque's architecture. Similar representations – that follow the same general scheme as that of the Bijapuri *mihrāb* – are generally identified as mosques and not as mausoleums.



FIGURE 9.5 Jami Masjid of 'Alī Ṭ Adilshāh, Bijapur: detail of left side of *mihrāb*

as a significant example of recourse to that micro-architecture so loved and widely diffused, both in the Adilshahi context and also in the wider Indian architectural context, both Hindu and Islamic. According to a consolidated practice, numerous three-dimensional micro-models of the monuments were applied to the monuments themselves in order to articulate their forms and enrich their decorative schemes.<sup>49</sup>

To arrive at the most plausible interpretation, it is essential to notice that this same unusual recourse to the representation of edifices in Bijapuri style on the *miḥrāb* is not exclusive to the Jami Masjid but appears also in the Mecca Masjid, generally ascribed to the reign of ‘Alī ʾĀdilshāh (r. 1656-72). In that mosque the *miḥrāb* is decorated according to precisely the same scheme, but with the same subject carved instead of painted (see Figure 9.6). The recurrence of this exact representation in such an important area of two different mosques could indicate that the intention was to represent some central meaning for Bijapur’s devoutness, and to recall it as a recognisable symbol for the faithful or to represent it as an important site for the Muslim community, probably translated into the local style.

Despite the fact that analysing and deciphering the *miḥrāb*’s meaning with certainty is not easy, in order to fully and correctly understand its symbolical value the interpretation of the paintings cannot overlook an understanding of the epigraphic programme, in its articulation and innovative essence, which comes to blend with the depicted images, thus conferring an extraordinary visual force to the work of art.

## 5 The Power of the Epigraphic Programme

In terms of articulation, the ambitious epigraphic programme of the *miḥrāb* within the Deccani region can probably only be compared with Ibrahim Rauza’s decorative scheme, which was realised a few years before in 1625-33. Although both can be considered as unique pieces of art in the Deccani landscape, from a preliminary analysis the selection of texts appears to be completely different.<sup>50</sup>

49 Elizabeth A. Lambourn, “A Self-Conscious Art? Seeing Micro-Architecture in Sultanate South Asia,” *Muqarnas* 27 (2010), 138-42.

50 For an exhaustive description and analysis of the epigraphic programme of the Ibrahim Rauza, see Bruce Wannell, “The Epigraphic Program of the Ibrāhīm Rauza in Bijapur,” in Navina Najat Haidar and Marika Sardar (eds), *Sultans of the South: Arts of India’s Deccan Courts, 1323-1687* (New York, NY: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2011), 252-67. For a complete transcription and translation of the inscriptions, see Abdullah Ghouchani and Bruce





FIGURE 9.6 Mecca Masjid *mihrāb*, Bijapur

As mentioned, Cousens translated only some of the inscriptions present in some medallions of the painting. According to his analysis they seem to refer to “the transitory character of the earthly life and to the afterlife as promised gift”.<sup>51</sup> An in-depth examination of the Jami Masjid *miḥrāb*'s inscriptions draws attention to a nearly exclusive use of Arabic, in contrast to the Ibrahim Rauza, and to the use of specific religious texts. These include Qur'anic passages, *asmā' al-ḥusnā* (the most beautiful names of God), *ṣalawāt* (or salutation upon the Prophet of Islam) and *aḥādīth* instead of prose and poetry. The only exception seems to be the passage, reported by Cousens, adorning the niche of the *miḥrāb*, which records the name of Yaqt Dabuli, an Abyssinian slave, who was evidently in some way involved in the realisation of the decoration. There is also a reference to the painted decoration having been realised in 1045/1636 by order of Sultan Muḥammad Adilshahi.<sup>52</sup>

A scheme better illustrates the organisation and the selection of the texts employed. In their positioning we can perceive a sort of hierarchical arrangement, with a significant role given to the names Allāh and Muḥammad, which dominate the spandrels of the *miḥrāb* niche (see Figure 9.7).

As has been mentioned in the results of other research carried out on the epigraphic evidence of the Deccani area, there is still no complete and accurate analysis of the whole repertoire which could enable us to trace trends, tendencies and precise phases.<sup>53</sup> Nonetheless, the epigraphic programme of the *miḥrāb* of Bijapur, if compared with that of the wider Deccani scene, appears significant, and furnishes several points for reflection. From the research conducted to date on the epigraphy of Gulbarga and Bidar, the major Deccani capitals, we find an almost exclusive use of Arabic, which was later to be substituted first by Persian, already used for the most significant inscriptions of

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Wannell, “The Inscription of the Ibrāhīm Rauza Tomb,” in Navina Najat Haidar and Marika Sardar (eds), *Sultans of the South: Arts of India's Deccan Courts, 1323-1687* (New York, NY: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2011), 268-301; Muḥammad Nāzim, *Bijapur Inscriptions. Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India, Vol. 49* (New Delhi: Archaeological Survey of India, 1999), 35-40.

51 Cousens, *Bijāpūr and Its Architectural Remains*, 59; Cousens, *Bijapur. The Old Capital of the Adil Shahi Kings*, 23.

52 Cousens, *Bijāpūr and Its Architectural Remains*, 59; Cousens, *Bijapur. The Old Capital of the Adil Shahi Kings*, 23.

53 Sara Mondini, “The Use of Quranic Inscriptions in the Bahmanis' Royal Mausoleums: the Case of Three Headstones from Ashtur,” in Mattia Guidetti and Sara Mondini (eds), *A mari usque ad mare: cultura visuale e materiale dall'Adriatico all'India. Scritti in Memoria di Gianclaudio Macchiarella* (Venice: Edizioni Ca' Foscari, 2016), 184-6.



FIGURE 9.7 Jami Masjid of 'Alī I 'Ādilshāh, Bijapur: spandrels above *mihrāb*

Bidar and Bijapur, and subsequently by Urdu.<sup>54</sup> Analysis of the texts in their present state permits us to identify a near-exclusive reliance on verses of the Qur'an and the *asmā' al-ḥusnā* in the epigraphy of Gulbarga. This tendency appears to change in Bidar, with the introduction of prose and poetry in Persian,<sup>55</sup> and then in the instance mentioned above of the Ibrahim Rauza in Bijapur. In light of these observations, the epigraphic programme of the *mihrāb* on the one hand marks a kind of return to previous tendencies, and on the other represents a note of innovation with its recourse to *aḥādīth* and *ṣalawāt*, the use of which seems ever rarer in the region (see Figure 9.8).

Although the choice of texts is surprising, what is really striking is the extraordinary coherence and force of the message presented through the selection of particular passages. As has been shown in a detailed analysis of the

54 Bernard O'Kane, *The Appearance of Persian on Islamic Art* (New York, NY: Persian Heritage Foundation, 2009), 67-112.

55 See, for example, Peyvand Firouzeh, "Sacred Kingship in the Garden of Poetry; Aḥmad Shāh Bahmanī's Tomb in Bidar (India)," *South Asian Studies* 31/2 (2015), 187-214; and Vivek Gupta, "Interpreting the Eye ('*ain*). Poetry and Painting in the Shrine of Aḥmad Shāh al-Walī al-Bahmanī (r. 1422-1436)," *Archives of Asian Art* 67/2 (2017), 189-208.



FIGURE 9.8 Jami Masjid of 'Alī i 'Ādilshāh, Bijapur: springing of arch of *mihrāb* with inscriptions

inscription on the *miḥrāb*,<sup>56</sup> it is precisely the full repertoire which supports the interpretation of the painted subject and confirms the key role of the Jami Masjid in the political and religious tensions of Bijapur. The selection of Qurʾanic verses as much as that of the *aḥādīth* is dominated by continual mention of the mosque as a building, of its importance and of the role of the Prophet Muḥammad as the guide of the community, the *umma*. The selected *aḥādīth* mention all the members of the *ahl al-bayt*: ʿĀʾisha, ʿAlī, Fāṭima, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn, and also some Companions of the Prophet, among whom were Rightly Guided Caliphs, and thus also Abū Bakr, ʿUmar and ʿUthmān, whose names would have been reviled by the Shiʿites during the reign of ʿAlī I ʿĀdilshāh (r. 1558-80). It does not seem accidental, then, that the two inscriptions which are most visible and most easily readable – in the lower part of the *miḥrāb*, symmetrically positioned to the right and to the left of the composition – evoke the restoration and the extension on the part of ʿUthmān of the mosque of the Prophet at Medina, and insist on the merits of whomever erects a mosque, specifically stating, “Whoever built a mosque, Allāh would build for him a similar place in Paradise.”<sup>57</sup>

All of these elements, both in the selection of texts and in the specific references which these contain, seem to confirm a return to Sunnism, and above all they seem to constitute an explicit and powerful declaration of Sunni identity. The references to the *ahl al-bayt* – among which the name of ʿĀʾisha, enemy of ʿAlī, who was seen negatively by the Shiʿites, stands out particularly – and to the Prophet’s Companions, and in particular the mention of the Rightly Guided Caliphs appear in clear opposition to the tendencies and decorative choices of the monuments of Shiʿite patronage in the city and in the region.<sup>58</sup> Moreover, the explicit mention of the Hanafi *madhhab*, one of the four schools considered orthodox by Sunnis, confirms and reinforces the affirmation of Sunnism which is furnished by the other inscriptions in the pictorial decoration of the *miḥrāb*.

Sultan Muḥammad ʿĀdilshāh (r. 1627-56), the patron of the painted *miḥrāb*, was a Sunni Muslim and would have adopted his father’s practice of favouring

56 A complete and concentrated analysis of the inscribed device of the Jami Masjid, carried out by the author in collaboration with Vicente Martí, is presently in the process of completion.

57 *Sahih al-Bukhari*, trans. Muhammad Muhsin Khan (Riyadh: Darussalam Publishing, 2013), 287 (no. 450).

58 The mausoleum of Aḥmad I Shah Bahmani (r. 1422-36) in Ashtur near Bidar, and its epigraphical programme, have recently been the object of new interpretations, and references to a Shiʿite identity have been identified; Mondini, “Vague Traits,” 155-80. For further examples see Allan, *The Art and the Architecture of the Twelver Shiʿism*, 63-70.

the *dakhnīs* rather than the *āfāqīs*.<sup>59</sup> However, according to Eaton's analysis, from the opening of his reign it seems possible to envisage a gradual but definite reaction to his father's liberalism. Eaton states that the group primarily responsible for promoting the cause of Islamic orthodoxy in the Bijapuri government would have been the '*ulamā*', and the ruling element would have progressively moved away from the communal accommodation that would have marked the first quarter of the seventeenth century.<sup>60</sup>

It is therefore inevitable that the *mihrāb* was intended to be read and perceived as a new manifesto, one fit to reaffirm the Sunni orientation of the Adilshahi dynasty in a historical phase which was deeply marked by the bloody conflict between the Shi'ite *āfāqīs*, and the Sunni *dakhnīs* and Abyssinians. At the same time it seems there was a parallel intended between the erection and restoration of Medina's mosque of the Prophet and the erection and later decoration of the Bijapur Jami Masjid, implicitly likening the role of 'Uthmān to that of the patrons of the Jami Masjid and of its *mihrāb* at Bijapur. Finally, Eaton's analysis might be taken in support of this interpretation, as he observes how over the decades the Jami Masjid seems to have assumed a key role in the city's religious dynamics, coming at last to incarnate and publically and solemnly transmit the fixed orthodoxy embraced by the Deccani capital.<sup>61</sup>

## 6 Conclusion

The reign of Muḥammad 'Ādilshāh (r. 1627-56) saw the consolidation of a return to Sunnism already promoted by his father and predecessor, Ibrāhīm II 'Ādilshāh (r. 1580-1627). This would have consequently also confirmed a return to the power of the *dakhnīs* at the expense of the *āfāqīs*, who would have never recovered the prestige and privileges gained previously. Nevertheless, Muḥammad 'Ādilshāh does not seem to have been as liberal as his father had been; he seems, rather, to have been responsible for an entrenchment in Islamic orthodoxy and the promoter of a climate less inclusive than that which had characterised earlier decades.<sup>62</sup>

Despite the fact that the social tensions that we have described were never completely eliminated, during the years that preceded the conquest of the Bijapur plateau by the Mughals (1686), the great impetus to the arts and the

59 Hutton, *Art of the Court of Bijapur*, 121.

60 Eaton, *Sufis of Bijapur*, 193-6.

61 Ibid., 86.

62 Ibid., 193-201.

active patronage of the Adilshahi sovereign never abated. The architectural production commissioned by Muḥammad ‘Ādilshāh confirms, perhaps with renewed vigour, the crucial role assigned to Iranian and Central Asian models, and probably also to the Anatolian ones. We could look at the Asar Mahal (1647) as an emblematic confirmation of this orientation. Originally erected to house a relic of the Prophet Muḥammad, with its tall portico entrance, pool and wall paintings it perfectly adopts the typical plan and style of coeval Persian palaces.<sup>63</sup> A further example, the Gol Gumbaz (1656),<sup>64</sup> the mausoleum erected for the sovereign with the largest dome of the Islamic world at the time, induced Goetz – despite the lack of surviving documentation – to envisage the role of a foreign architect, even one attached to the school of Sinan. Goetz, in fact, speculates on the identity of Malik Santal (Sandal), hypothesising his involvement both in the realisation of the Ibrahim Rauza and of the Gol Gumbaz and – while admitting the inconsistency of this thesis – desires to connect him even to the realisation of the Blue mosque in Istanbul before reaching the Deccan.<sup>65</sup>

While it is hard to corroborate Goetz’s hypothesis in the absence of proof, it is certain that the system of pendentives on which the Gol Gumbaz dome stands – applied also in the new Jami Masjid to support the central dome of the payer hall – was probably imported from Central Asia and applied for the first time in Bidar by the Bahmanis, together with pyramidal roofs.<sup>66</sup> At the same time it is interesting to note how the position of the Gol Gumbaz, behind Hashim Pir’s *dargāh*, is tangible evidence of the deep attachment of the sovereign to the Sufi component of the city,<sup>67</sup> proposing the model already noted in other Deccani capitals according to which relations between political and religious power were spatially and stylistically transposed.<sup>68</sup>

In light of the eloquence of the coeval architectural production, the new Jami Masjid and its unique *miḥrāb*’s decoration could be taken, in a way, as a

63 Cousins, *Bijāpūr and Its Architectural Remains*, 89-95; Hutton, *Art of the Court of Bijapur*, 113; Najat Haidar and Sardar, *Sultans of Deccan India, 1500-1700*, 80.

64 Cousins, *Bijāpūr and Its Architectural Remains*, 98-106; Hutton, *Art of the Court of Bijapur*, 122.

65 Goetz, “Ottoman-Turkish Architecture in Bijapur,” 522-6.

66 Merklinger, “Possible Seljuq Influence on the Dome of the Gol Gumbad,” 257-61.

67 Eaton, *Sufis of Bijapur*, 120.

68 Carl W. Ernst, *Eternal Garden. Mysticism, History, and Politics at a South Asian Sufi Center* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2004), 191-238; Sara Mondini, “A Widespread ‘Taste for the Macabre’, Apotropaic or Political Marks? Urbanism, Landscapes and Funerary Architecture in the Indian Sultanates.” in Francine Giese, Anna Pawlak and Markus Thome (eds), *Tomb, Memory, Space. Concepts of Representation in Premodern Christian and Islamic Art* (Berlin/Boston, MA: De Gruyter, 2018), 297.

further symbol of the ongoing religious and social changes that were taking place in Bijapur. While, as stated, the mosque with its anomalous plan would confirm the role of Central Asian and Iranian models in the capital's scenario, the *mihrāb*'s message seems to proclaim the renewed Sunni orientation promoted by Muḥammad ʿĀdilshāh. The analysis here, which is supported by an examination of the epigraphic programme, demonstrates how, in the context of the Bijapur scene, the example of the congregational mosque and of its *mihrāb* constitute a significant case study.

An analysis of the accounts of Firishta and Shīrāzī – both newcomers serving the Deccani courts – demonstrates the limits of their narratives, which, despite relying on the real geographical and historical context, are imbued with dubious elements, literary *topoi* and constructions in order to project a precise image of their patrons.<sup>69</sup> Nevertheless their voices confirm the importance of newcomers and of the Indian Ocean network that brought them to the Deccan, but while reinforcing the dimensions of the Persianate cosmopolis they often do not provide enough reliable information in order to define precisely the Turkic role in the region. It is the transposition onto the visual plane of the sharp conflict between the “old-comers” and “newcomers” – which, it seems, determined the fate of the previous Bahmani reign – that restores the force of the artistic medium and of the political and religious use of a key monument like the Jami Masjid to affirm a Sunni identity. At the same time, the *mihrāb* embodied the crucial role of old- and newcomers – whether of Arab, Iranian or Central Asian origin – in influencing and conditioning the history of Bijapur and the Deccan. Thus, in a context in which, as mentioned, the sectarian identities expressed in art appear to be rather subtle,<sup>70</sup> and in light of the crucial role of artistic patronage in the processes of identity building, the analysis of what is “inscribed”, of what decorative choices and the election of formal elements can tell us, can be crucial in order to trace out more precisely connections and encounters between the Turkic – and even Ottoman – world and South Asia.

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69 Fischel, “Origin Narratives,” 73-91.

70 Hutton, *Art of the Court of Bijapur*, 16, 46-50.



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## “Made in Istanbul, Delhi or Agra”: Serving Imperial and Princely Courts in the Ottoman and Mughal Worlds

*Suraiya Faroqhi*

Goods for the use of a ruler and his/her palace have a special status in many societies. As Eugenia Vanina has pointed out for the Indian context, high-quality goods took a long time to manufacture and the artisan might need to wait for an even longer time before finding a customer. Therefore, luxury goods were often the product of specialists working under the protection of a ruler or magnate, who paid for their upkeep and monopolised the product of their labour.<sup>1</sup> In the same way, Ottoman high-quality craftwork was often only possible because of elite patronage.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the similarities between the organisation of manufacturing for rulers and elites between Delhi, Agra or Jaipur, on the one hand, and Istanbul or Bursa, on the other, are especially striking. We might almost say that there is a family resemblance – albeit a similarity not between siblings but between cousins in the second or third degree. Resemblance and difference combine in an intriguing manner, and in the opinion of the present author the results well repay the researcher’s attention.

In the present chapter, the terms “emperor” and “imperial” always refer to the Mughal court, while I use “sultan” and “sultanic” for the Ottoman context. The adjectives “regal” and “royal” are applicable to courtly demand of any type, while the term “princely” denotes sub- or post-imperial courts in both the Ottoman and the Mughal orbits. As for the terms “sub-” or “post-imperial”, they derive from Mughal historiography, “sub-imperial” referring to principalities dependent on a given empire but autonomous in domestic affairs. While such polities existed in both orbits, “post-imperial” applies only to the Indian environment and denotes former Mughal provinces that by the mid-1700s, former governors ruled without much reference to the weakening emperors in Delhi.<sup>3</sup>

1 Eugenia Vanina, *Urban Crafts and Craftsmen in Medieval India (Thirteenth to Eighteenth Centuries)* (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 2004), 99.

2 Hilal Kazan, *xvi. Asırda Sarayın Sanatı Himayesi* (Istanbul: İSAR Foundation Publications, 2010).

3 I have copied all Hindi names from the sources in which I found them.

Covering the period between 1526 and about 1750, we begin our discussion with the (probable) aims of the persons acting as patrons. While the Ottoman sultans and Mughal emperors have obvious priority, courtiers and high officials enter the picture too, in addition to dependent princes, who had assimilated the civilisation of the centre and from this starting point developed their own versions of princely patronage. While extremely important in the Indian case, this feature is less significant in the Ottoman world. Even so, we find some provincial versions of Ottoman palace culture in Moldavia, Wallachia and, especially, the Tatar principality of Crimea.

The first section of this chapter concerns monumental architecture. Given the enormous sacrifices, both human and material, which such works entailed, we foreground the advantages that rulers and elites expected from the buildings that they put up. Thus, we look for the equivalent of what historians of the European Renaissance have called “the patron’s payoff”.<sup>4</sup> In this context, legitimisation of rule is the key issue; and as public works have to be visible (at least to the people who matter) before they can legitimise a patron, the visibility of mosques and other public works is a principal object of our discussion.

In the second section, we briefly touch upon the historiographies of Ottoman and Mughal figurative painting. Recent studies of Ottoman palace workshops emphasise the political implications of illustrated volumes undertaken in these venues. By contrast, scholars working on Mughal miniatures often focus on connoisseurship. Even so, political issues are not altogether absent, as scholars have studied the manner in which Mughal painters depicted court hierarchies, obviously a political issue, and they have further pointed out that when political propaganda was at issue, non-events could become the subject of paintings. Thus, Jahāngīr (r. 1605-27) appears when taking aim at the decapitated Malik Ambar, who was very much alive at the time of the emperor’s commission.<sup>5</sup>

All patrons needed to ensure that the charities they had established received some institutional backing. Otherwise, there would be no funds available for the services that the founders had wanted to provide, to say nothing of the upkeep of the buildings in which people were to pray, teach, preach or feed the poor. The relevant arrangements are the subject of the third section. In the

4 Jonathan K. Nelson and Richard J. Zeckhauser, *The Patron’s Payoff: Conspicuous Commissions in Italian Renaissance Art* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014).

5 *The Jahangirnama: Memoirs of Jahangir, Emperor of India*, translated and edited by Wheeler M. Thackston (Washington, DC/New York, NY: Freer Gallery of Art, Arthur M. Sackler Gallery and Oxford University Press 1999), 165 and 476. For a biography, see Omar Ali, *Malik Ambar: Power and Slavery across the Indian Ocean* (Oxford/New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2016).

Ottoman case, the key institution was the pious foundation, enshrined in Islamic law and usually recorded in an elaborate document (*vakıfnâme*, *vakfiyye*).<sup>6</sup> Such records are common enough for the Ottoman orbit from the 1300s onwards, but less so in the Mughal world. However, pious foundations operated in Mughal India as well, although in many cases the imperial treasury granted funds directly to institutions and people of religious merit.<sup>7</sup> Such direct payments occurred in the Ottoman empire as well, though probably not as often as in Mughal India.

Information on the payment of court artisans is scarce and dispersed. Certain specialists received regular pay, but it often remains unclear whether the sultan or emperor expected the recipients to live on their salaries. Presumably, emperors and sultans wanted to restrict the services of the most highly regarded artists/artisans to the palace orbit, but to what extent did they accept the perhaps unwelcome truth that court artists and artisans had to live, and therefore found outside patrons when no official commissions were forthcoming?<sup>8</sup>

In the fourth and final section, we deal with the internal functioning of court ateliers. While information on this key issue is fragmentary too, we know that interest or lack of interest on the part of a monarch determined the speed and quality of the work of court artists/artisans both in Istanbul and in Agra. A few rulers, particularly the Emperor Jahāngīr, took pride in being connoisseurs.<sup>9</sup> As Jahāngīr's father Akbar, and in a more limited sense Shāh Jahān (r. 1628-58), showed an informed interest in painting as well, the Mughal palace and the courts subject to the Mughal emperors sponsored very large numbers of miniatures.<sup>10</sup> Perhaps the problematic status of figurative painting from a religious viewpoint prevented certain Ottoman sultans of the seventeenth century from openly expressing their appreciation of this art. However, given the limits of our knowledge it is prudent to avoid categorical statements.

Whatever the reasoning may have been, the Ottoman court focused on the patronage of calligraphy. This art certainly enjoyed high esteem at the Mughal court, and Abū'l-Faẓl devoted several pages of his work on Akbar's governance to the different ways of writing Arabic letters in the different officially

6 Osman Gazi Özgüdenli, "Vakfiye," in *Türkiye Diyânet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, internet version, <<https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/vakfiye>> (accessed on 10 February 2020).

7 John F. Richards, *The Mughal Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 92.

8 Tülay Artan, "Arts and architecture," in Suraiya N. Faroqhi (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Turkey: The Later Ottoman Empire, 1603-1839* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 408-80.

9 *Jahāngīrnāma*, 268.

10 Abū'l-Faẓl, *Ain-i Ākbarī* [sic] of *Abul-Fazl-i Āllamī*, 3 vols, translated by H. Blochmann and H.S. Jarrett, and revised by Jadunath Sarkar (Calcutta: Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1927-49), Vol. 1, 102-15.

recognised scripts.<sup>11</sup> Even so, it appears as if the Ottoman elite allotted an even greater importance to elegant penmanship. When, in the second half of the seventeenth century, Ottoman patronage for miniature painting had become something of a rarity, representatives of the high elite like the grand vizier Fazıl Ahmed Paşa (1635-76) collected works of calligraphy. In addition, this intellectually minded vizier encouraged scribes in his service to improve their penmanship, and worked hard to perfect his own skills in this art.<sup>12</sup>

## 1 Searches for Legitimacy: Leaving a Widely Visible “Regal Mark” on the Cityscape

In both the Ottoman and the Mughal worlds, elites and commoners expected the rulers to provide venues for the practice of religion and education, in addition to at least a modicum of support for the poor.<sup>13</sup> As both the sultans and the emperors defined their rule as Islamic, the principal addressees of their legitimising discourses were Muslims. The latter might be local men, as in the case of most office holders serving the sultans. Or else, they might be immigrants from Iran and Central Asia, as was true of many dignitaries of the Mughal empire throughout the 1500s and 1600s.<sup>14</sup> As for the degree to which non-Muslims were addressees of legitimising discourses as well, it varied according to circumstances. In the Ottoman orbit, public soup kitchens probably distributed to the poor whatever food remained at the end of the day once the officially specified beneficiaries had received their shares; presumably, some bread or soup went the non-Muslim poor as well. However, in principle, the Ottoman government assumed that every Christian or Jewish community educated “its own” youngsters and extended charity to “its own” poor.<sup>15</sup>

The Mughal emperors spent significant amounts of money on alms, especially the funds brought out from the treasury for use during “weighing” ceremonies, when courtiers placed an emperor or prince on weighing scales, counter-balanced the princely body with money or goods and distributed

11 Ibid., Vol. 1, 102-13. The discussion of painting by the same author was much shorter: 113-15.

12 Muhammed Fatih Çalışır, “A Virtuous Grand Vizier: Politics and Patronage in the Ottoman Empire during the Grand Vizierate of Fazıl Ahmed Pasha (1661-1676),” unpublished PhD dissertation, Georgetown University 2016, 133-68.

13 Amy Singer, *Charity in Islamic Societies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 105.

14 Richards, *Mughal Empire*, 17-20.

15 On *vakıf*s set up by non-Muslims to benefit “their own” poor, see Singer, *Charity*, 99.

these resources among the poor.<sup>16</sup> Until Aurangzeb (r. 1658-1707) abolished this ceremony because of its non-Muslim origin, the palace practised it at regular intervals.<sup>17</sup> At the same time, in the Mughal world madrasas functioned as schools for future administrators and were accessible to Hindus as well, while Ottoman madrasas focused on Islamic divinity and law, and the student body was exclusively Muslim.<sup>18</sup> In the Indian environment, Hindus might even sponsor madrasas to enable local young men to qualify as scribes and accountants, for the Mughal administration employed Hindus in sizeable numbers – even under the self-consciously Islamic emperor Aurangzeb.<sup>19</sup> Conversely, at least in certain situations, a Mughal emperor might sponsor a Hindu ceremony.<sup>20</sup> In the Ottoman world by contrast, only the sultans of the mid-1800s occasionally subsidised churches.<sup>21</sup>

When it came to commissioning Ottoman artwork, and especially architecture, the sultan, his court and his dynasty had few competitors. Apart from the sultans and certain princes of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, some royal women founded mosques and madrasas, with the foundations of the spouse of Sultan Süleyman, Hürrem Sultan (d. 1558), probably the best known today.<sup>22</sup> In the 1660s, when the sultan's family sponsored a much smaller number of charities, Hatice Turhan (d. 1683), the mother of Sultan Mehmed IV (r. 1648-87), completed the complex known today as the Yeni Cami in the business district of Eminönü on the shores of the Golden Horn.<sup>23</sup> Most other personalities in a position to build, mainly viziers and court officials, financed the construction

16 For a miniature showing this ceremony, see John Michael Rogers, *Mughal Miniatures* (London: British Museum Press, 1993), 92.

17 Catherine B. Asher and Cynthia Talbot, *India before Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 27.

18 While the study of Ottoman religious scholars is currently flourishing, for the outlines of *medrese* teaching, the work of İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı remains valuable: *Osmanlı Devletinin İlimiye Teşkilatı* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2014).

19 Kumkum Chatterjee, *The Cultures of History in Early Modern India: Persianization and Mughal Culture in Bengal* (Oxford and Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2009), 225.

20 Richard Eaton, "Temple Desecration and Indo-Muslim States," in idem, *Essays on Islam and Indian History* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000), 94-132.

21 Darin Stephanov, *Ruler Visibility and Popular Belonging in the Ottoman Empire, 1808-1908* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018), 35 of manuscript. I thank the author and BUP for allowing me to see this work before publication.

22 Cahit Baltacı, "Hürrem Sultan," in *Türkiye Diyânet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, internet version, <<http://www.islamansiklopedisi.info/dia/ayrmetin.php?idno=180500>> (accessed on 30 October 2018). For a monograph, see Leslie Peirce, *Empress of the East: How a European Slave Girl Became Queen of the Ottoman Empire* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2017).

23 Lucienne Thys Şenocak, *Ottoman Women Builders: The Architectural Patronage of Hadice Turhan Sultan* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002).



of similar large and small complexes of mosques and madrasas. During the reign of Ahmed I (r. 1603-17), the governor and later chief financial officer (*baş defterdâr*) Ekmekçizâde Ahmed Paşa (d. 1618) sponsored a large caravansary and bridge near Edirne.<sup>24</sup> Moreover, the Köprülü family, whose representatives held the office of grand vizier for about fifty years during the later 1600s, funded a number of major charities as well, particularly in the rapidly expanding port city of Izmir.<sup>25</sup>

If possible, elite patrons employed members of the sultans' "chamber of architects" (*haşşa mi'mârları*).<sup>26</sup> If the latter were unavailable, Ottoman grandees hired local builders, as is obvious from the rather non-classical mosques and minarets that Mehmed IV (r. 1648-87), his mother and his courtiers commissioned on the island of Crete, conquered from the Venetians between 1645 and 1669.<sup>27</sup> By focusing on this site, the Ottoman elites of the later 1600s probably wanted to use the limited resources at their disposal to stabilise the sultan's rule over an island whose conquest had been particularly long and difficult.

At present, we can only speculate why sultans İbrahim (r. 1640-48), Mehmed IV (r. 1648-87) and their successors Süleyman II, Ahmed II and Mustafa II, whose brief reigns spanned the period between 1687 and 1703, showed only limited interest in funding artwork. Perhaps the unending wars of the 1600s swallowed up all available resources, while the at least temporary influence of the revivalist Kadızadelis, who wanted to abolish everything that had not existed in the time of the Prophet Muḥammad, discouraged rulers and officials from showing an interest in the pictorial arts.<sup>28</sup> However, other factors may have been involved too – especially the move from Istanbul to Edirne, where the sultans mostly resided during the second half of the seventeenth century.

24 <<https://www.kulturportali.gov.tr/turkiye/edirne/kulturenvanteri/ekmekcioglu-ahmet-pasa-kervansarayi>> and: <<https://www.kulturportali.gov.tr/turkiye/edirne/kulturenvanteri/ekmekcioglu-ahmet-pasa-koprusu>> (no authors given; both accessed on 10 February 2020).

25 Merlijn Olon, "Brought under the Law of the Land': The History, Demography and Geography of Crossculturalism in Early Modern Izmir, and the Köprülü Project of 1678," unpublished PhD thesis, Leiden University, 2014.

26 Şerafettin Turan, "Osmanlı Teşkilâtında Hassa Mimarları," *Ankara Üniversitesi Dil Tarih Coğrafya Fakültesi Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi* 1, no. 1 (1963-4), 157-200.

27 Irene A. Bierman, "The Ottomanization of Crete," in Irene A. Bierman, Rifa'at A. Abou-El-Haj and Donald Preziosi (eds), *The Ottoman City and its Parts: Urban Structure and Social Order* (New Rochelle, NY: Aristide D. Karatsas, 1991), 53-75.

28 Madeline C. Zilfi, "The Kadızadelis: Discordant Revivalism in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 45 (1986), 251-74; Tülay Artan, "El yazmaları ışığında bir çevre ve çehre eskizi: Kadızâdeliler, Müceddidiler ve Damad İbrahim Paşa (1730)," *Müteferrika* 50, no. 2 (2016), 1-94.

Court workshops must have been active in Edirne, but few of their products seem to have survived.<sup>29</sup> Some artwork was probably lost when the court had to return to Istanbul after the rebellion of 1703, when the newly enthroned Ahmed III (r. 1703-30) had to promise that from then on, he would reside in Istanbul. The destruction of the Edirne palace during the Russo–Ottoman war of 1877-8 further diminishes our knowledge of whatever artwork the sultans may have acquired during the later 1600s.<sup>30</sup>

After a slowdown lasting for nearly a hundred years, the patronage of the sultans and the female members of the dynasty revived in the eighteenth century, especially when Istanbul was at issue. Most likely, the restoration of the sultan's legitimacy was a consideration: Mehmed IV had lost his throne in 1687, and the same misfortune befell Mustafa II in 1703. Even more dramatically, the rebellion of 1703 involved the murder of Şeyhülislam Feyzullah, who headed the Ottoman religious-cum-judicial bureaucracy and, in addition, had enjoyed the sultan's support because the latter wanted to establish a powerful political household to balance the long-established Köprülü.<sup>31</sup>

In this situation, it made sense for the sultan and his family to resume the custom of providing charitable services to the inhabitants of Istanbul, with a special focus on Üsküdar – impoverished, but since the mid-1500s a favoured location for the charities of royal women.<sup>32</sup> In the early eighteenth century, Rabia Gülnuş Emetullah Sultan, queen mother (*vālide sultān*) under the two full brothers Mustafa II (r. 1695-1703) and Ahmed III, sponsored a major mosque complex before her death in 1715. Moreover, by mid-century Sultan Mustafa III (r. 1757-74) founded a mosque in memory of his mother Mihrişah Emine Sultan.<sup>33</sup> In *intra muros* Istanbul, the grand vizier Nevşehirli Damad İbrahim Paşa (d. 1730) built another important complex near the Şehzade mosque in central Istanbul, of which only a part survives (1720). The sultan

29 Filiz Çağman, *Osmanlı Sarayı Tasvir Sanatı* (Istanbul: MASA, 2016), 97. The author says very little about the court's sojourn in Edirne.

30 The emergent dissertation of Ayşe Kaplan (Sabancı University) will surely shed light on this issue.

31 Rifa'at Abou-El-Haj, *The 1703 Rebellion and the Structure of Ottoman Politics* (Leiden: Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut te İstanbul, 1984); Michael Nizri, *Ottoman High Politics and the Ulema Household* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

32 Betül İpşirli Arğıt, *Rabia Gülnuş Emetullah Sultan 1640-1715* (Istanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2014). For construction in 18th-century Istanbul compare with Shirine Hamadeh, *The City's Pleasures: Istanbul in the Eighteenth Century* (Seattle, WA/London: University of Washington Press, 2007).

33 For a series of photographs of this mosque, currently under restoration, see Mahmut Ökçesiz, "İstanbul'un Tarihi Mezarlıkları 19, Ayazma Cami ve Haziresi," <<http://www.turizmhaberleri.com/KoseYazisi.asp?ID=3759>> (accessed on 10 February 2020).

himself followed suit with an imposing fountain in front of the entrance to the Topkapı Palace, completed in 1729.<sup>34</sup> However, these enhanced services to the Istanbul population, especially the local Muslims, did not suffice to keep Ahmed III and his grand vizier in power: in 1730, the sultan lost his throne and the grand vizier his life in another uprising, triggered by a notorious lack of success in the war against Iran.

In the 1700s, most patrons lavished their attention on Istanbul, for, given the sultan's permanent residence in this city, charities in other places were less likely to gain attention from the monarch. However, the grand vizier Damad İbrahim Paşa defied convention and built a complex of mosque, library and soup kitchen in a village in central Anatolia which, due to the activity generated by the foundation, became a town named Nevşehir, today a provincial capital.<sup>35</sup> Furthermore, some of the magnates governing many Ottoman provinces acted as patrons to a greater or lesser extent, usually favouring the places that they governed. These men sponsored mosques and madrasas in the traditional manner; in addition, some of them built libraries and fountains as well, which were less costly to maintain.<sup>36</sup> Remarkably, the female relatives of power holders in Anatolia and Rumelia rarely appeared as the founders of charities, while such "ladies bountiful" were quite frequent among Ottoman palace women, and among the elite governing the remote province of Baghdad as well.<sup>37</sup> At present, we do not have a good explanation for this divergence.

Ottoman sultanic mosques dominated the cityscapes of the relevant towns and cities (see Figure 10.1), visible from a distance due to their locations inside gardens, where the administration might permit burials but strictly excluded shops and dwellings. Even so, the open spaces surrounding the mosques of sultans and viziers were usually smaller than the enormous tomb gardens surrounding the mausolea of Mughal dignitaries. While Ottoman garden designers were less concerned with the enhancement of a building by the perfect symmetry of its surroundings than was true of their Mughal colleagues, in Istanbul the hilly terrain and long seashores provided visibility without a great deal of extra expense. Either the foundation complexes were on high hills,

34 Selim Karahasanoğlu, *Kadı ve Günlüğü: Sadreddinzade Telhisî Mustafa Efendi Günlüğü (1711-1735) üstüne bir İnceleme* (Istanbul: İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2013), 112.

35 İlknur Aktuğ, *Nevşehir Damat İbrahim Paşa Külliyesi* (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1993).

36 İnci Kuyulu, *Kara Osmanoğlu Ailesine ait Mimari Eserler*, (Ankara: T.C. Kültür Bakanlığı, 1992); Rossitsa Gradeva, "Osman Pazvantoğlu in Vidin: Between Old and New," in idem, *War and Peace in Rumeli: 15th to Beginning of 19th Century* (Istanbul: Isis Press, 2008), 11-50.

37 Thomas Lier, *Haushalte und Haushaltspolitik in Bagdad 1704-1831* (Würzburg: Ergon Verlag, 2004), 75-80.



FIGURE 10.1 Banyashi mosque in Sofia, Bulgaria. Built in 1576 by Mimar Sinan (d. 1588), the chief architect of sultans Süleyman, Selim II and Murad III. Photograph by Suraiya Faruqi

such as the Fatih and Süleymaniye, or else the founders chose seaside spots, visible from afar with houses and commercial buildings functioning as backdrops. Royal women and viziers especially favoured locations at the entrances to Istanbul.

When building the Topkapı Palace, visibility was a concern as well. While the site was not by nature very high and many of the buildings did not have upper floors, substructures and the exposed location of the promontory made sure that the complex was visible from afar, especially to travellers arriving by sea.<sup>38</sup> In addition, both the palace in Istanbul and its counterpart in Edirne possessed so-called “towers of justice” (*adalet kulesi*). In Istanbul, this tower adorned the chambers where the sultan’s council deliberated, while we know less about the function of the still-extant Edirne structure. Intriguingly, a late sixteenth-century miniature depicting the palace of the princes in Manisa shows two buildings that were definitely towers and others that may be. As the latter palace began to decay from the late 1500s onwards and written sources are sparse, we do not know whether one of the towers had once served as an *adalet kulesi*.<sup>39</sup>

Our knowledge of non-royal palaces is limited, since they were mostly of wood and have disappeared either through natural decay or else during the many fires which for centuries were a bane of life in the Ottoman capital. Moreover, in the 1600s and 1700s, discontented janissaries quite often set fire to the grand vizier’s palace.<sup>40</sup> The single surviving example of a city palace is the residence of İbrahim Paşa (d. 1536), built of stone and extant at least in part.<sup>41</sup> Made up of a sequence of five courts, one of which has completely disappeared, this complex is remarkable for featuring numerous buildings with two storeys – as noted, a rarity in the Topkapı Palace. In addition, the complex apparently contained a tower, which must have enhanced visibility even more. As comparable structures are so rare, it is unfortunately hard to say whether these features underlined the claims to near-royal status that may well have cost the grand vizier his life.

From the seventeenth century onwards, and even more in the 1700s, the Bosphorus became a favourite site for members of the elite to spend the summer. Featuring façades facing the waterfront, these residences, known as *yalis*,

38 Gülru Necipoğlu, *Architecture, Ceremonial and Power: The Topkapı Palace in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* (Cambridge, MA/New York, NY: Architectural History Foundation, Inc. and MIT Press, 1991).

39 Hakkı Acun, *Manisa’da Türk Devri Yapıları* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1999), 444-5.

40 Tülay Artan, “The Making of the Sublime Porte near the Alay Köşkü and a Tour of a Grand Veziral Palace at Süleymaniye,” *Turcica* 43 (2012), 145-204.

41 Nurhan Atasoy, *İbrahim Paşa Sarayı* (Ankara: Sahaf Yayınları, 2012).



FIGURE 10.2 The seaside villa of Hatice Sultan, sister to Sultan Selim III (r. 1789-1807), designed and depicted by Antoine Ignace Melling (1763-1831). © Staatsbibliothek Berlin, Libri impr. rari fol. 325

were widely visible from the boats that connected the Bosphorus settlements to the walled city. From the land, gardens probably shielded most *yals* from public view, allowing female inhabitants greater freedom of movement than their families permitted them within the city walls. The single example surviving, at least in part, is the *yali* of Amcazade Hüseyin Paşa, a member of the Köprülü family, built in 1699.<sup>42</sup> However, we can gain an idea of the waterfront of the *yali* once belonging to Princess Hatice (1766-1822) through an image produced by Antoine Ignace Melling (1763-1831) (see Figure 10.2). Other seaside mansions, studied by Tülay Artan, appear only in the written sources of the period.<sup>43</sup> Moreover, in the early nineteenth century the sultan ordered a number of lists that allowed him to control the location of *yals* and remove property owners that he considered undesirable. Prime sources for social history, these lists indicate the Bosphorus villages favoured by this or that group of elite figures.<sup>44</sup>

42 For a description and photograph, see Anonymous author, Köprülü Yalısı [sic], <<https://archnet.org/sites/3479>> (accessed on 10 February 2020).

43 Tülay Artan, "Architecture as a Theatre of Life: Profile of the Eighteenth-Century Bosphorus," unpublished PhD dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1988.

44 Ayşe Kaplan, "From Seasonal to Permanent: A Study of the Effects of *Göç* Tradition on the Bosphorus Shores," unpublished MA thesis, Istanbul Bilgi University, 2012.

Similarly to their Ottoman counterparts, Mughal palaces and mosques dominated the localities in which they stood. In the Mughal empire too, the emperors were the paramount patrons – and from the reign of Bābur onwards, they followed the example of their Central Asian and Afghan predecessors who had once ruled the Delhi sultanate, by building imposing mosques and caravansaries. If sponsored by the emperors, before the reign of Aurangzeb, mosques were sometimes part of ensembles dominated not by these structures but rather by monumental mausolea. Surrounded by the smaller but still elaborate tombs of the dignitaries who had once served the deceased ruler, the royal mausolea, especially that of Humāyūn in Delhi, were enormous by Ottoman standards. At the same time, inscriptions were not widespread, and identifying the person(s) buried even in some major mausolea can be quite difficult.

Agra and Fatehpur Sikri had been insignificant before Akbar (r. 1556-1605) decided to establish his residences in these places, making the two towns into Mughal imperial creations. In the former, the building known as Agra fort (see Figure 10.5), built by Akbar and expanded by Jahāngīr, towered over the Yamuna, which in the 1500s was a more substantial river than it is today. This site became the city centre, and many Mughal nobles elected the riverside for their villas and gardens, with the latter becoming tomb sites once the original possessor had died.<sup>45</sup> Tomb gardens often featured a strictly symmetrical *chahār bāgh* pattern, divided into four equal sections by watercourses, as was typical of palatial dwellings or else of the gardens that Bābur had once used for royal residences under tents. Because of the large size of the tomb gardens, any mausoleum within would have been visible from a distance.

From the mid-seventeenth century onward, the Agra mausoleum of Mumtāz Mahal and her spouse the emperor Shāh Jahān (r. 1628-58) competed for prominence with the older city centre. Originally, the Taj complex had been even more dominant than it is today because it contained a business district of its own, now largely destroyed. Functioning as the centre of Agra's "new town", the Taj complex must thus have rivalled the established city centre. In addition, the surroundings featured further pleasure gardens. Situated in the middle of open land, the Taj thus was highly visible: a perspective still available today if you look out from the walls of Agra fort.

In Fatehpur Sikri, created on Akbar's orders and abandoned by him some fifteen years later, visibility was a dominant concern as well. When designing the courtyard – holding a large mosque and, later on, the mausoleum of the Chishtiyya shaykh Salīm – Akbar's architects set an enormous monumental gate on a small hill, so that visitors first saw the mosque–tomb complex from below, a perspective that much enhanced the impact of the building. As for the

45 Ebba Koch, "The Zahara Bagh (Bagh-i Jahanara)," *Environmental Design* 2 (1986), 30-7.



FIGURE 10.3 The mosque of Aurangzeb (r. 1658-1707) in Benares/Varanasi – depicted by James Prinsep in 1834, when the mosque still possessed the two minarets that are now lost. © Universitätsbibliothek Heidelberg, *Benares Illustrated* (276 rei 2002/236), p. 22

adjacent palace, Syed Ali Nadeem Rezavi has stressed that it occupied the centre of the ridge that was the highest elevation in the area.<sup>46</sup> By placing the palace in this location, the architects accomplished two things at once. As a lake bordered the palace compound on one side, the inhabitants of the latter could enjoy the movements of boats and waterfowl. At the same time, there was nothing to block the view that visiting dignitaries had of the palace when they approached it after travelling the short distance from Agra.

Perhaps the emphasis on visibility and dominance of a site is most obvious in Shāhjahānabād (today: Old Delhi), the new palace-cum-city that Shāh Jahān situated on the banks of the Yamuna, on two hills some distance away from the mausoleum of Humāyūn and the grave of the venerated saint Nizām al-dīn Awliyā.<sup>47</sup> The fortified palace occupied one of the hills, and the new city's great mosque the other one. Ebba Koch has pointed out that Akbar and Jahāngīr had occasionally visited Delhi, where the graves of Islamic holy figures were pilgrimage sites, and the many by now abandoned residences of the medieval

46 Syed Ali Nadeem Rezavi, *Fathpur Sikri Revisited* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2013), 35.

47 Stephen Blake, "Cityscape of an imperial capital: Shahjahanabad in 1739," in Nirmal Kumar (ed.), *Essays in Medieval Delhi* (New Delhi: Research India Press, 2016), 261-311.



Delhi sultanate symbolised the continuity of Muslim rule. Even so, Akbar and Jahāngīr had never lived there, and Shāh Jahān's decision to return to Delhi possibly had some connection with the increased emphasis on Islamic piety characteristic of this later ruler.<sup>48</sup> Whatever the emperor's motivation may have been, and "doing things differently" from his father and grandfather was a possible consideration as well, he did not change the Mughal tradition of building monumental structures impressing the viewer from afar. Lahore was a further imperial capital, where Akbar, Jahāngīr and Shāh Jahān sponsored monumental buildings. Regrettably, tense relations between India and Pakistan have resulted in the absence of Lahore from anthologies of urban histories produced in India, and foreign scholars focusing on India often neglect this city as well.<sup>49</sup>

As for Aurangzeb, he constructed a highly visible mosque in Benares/Varanasi, where in retaliation against local support for the Maratha rebellions against his rule he tore down the Vishvanatha temple once sponsored by Tōdar Mal (d. 1589), a Hindu dignitary who had once reorganised Akbar's treasury.<sup>50</sup> In its place, on a high hill, Aurangzeb built the mosque known as the 'Ālamgīrī, after the cognomen of "world-seizer" that he had adopted (see Figure 10.3). A drawing made in the nineteenth century shows that the structure was even more dominant at that time, before losing the two high minarets that had previously adorned it.

As strongly fortified palaces, Agra and Shāhjahānabād conformed to the tradition of the Tughluq sultans who had dominated fourteenth-century Delhi, and to that of Rajput princes as well, who often resided in palaces located within nearly impregnable fortifications. Thus, at Amber in Rajasthan the Kachhwaha princes, sponsors of elaborate court workshops, inhabited a hilltop palace visible from a distance. The enhanced defences of this complex included not only the hill where the fortress was located but surrounding elevations as well. Thus, the fortress remained in view even if the viewer was facing in the opposite direction. The layout of the palace combined features from Hindu temples with others inspired by the palace-fortress of Shāh Jahān (part of the structure is probably older). However, in the 1720s the Kachhwaha dynasty moved its residence to a nearby site on the plain, protected by a citadel but

48 Ebba Koch, "The Delhi of the Mughals prior to Shahjahanabad as Reflected in the Patterns of Imperial Visits," in *ibid.*, 122-62.

49 Compare Yogesh Sharma and Pius Malekandathil (eds), *Cities in Medieval India* (Delhi: Primus Books, 2014) with the index of the strongly art-historical work by Asher and Talbot, *India before Europe*, which contains no entry for Lahore despite the many surviving Mughal buildings in that city.

50 Asher and Talbot, *India before Europe*, 231.



FIGURE 10.4 The mausoleum of 'Abd al-Rahim khān-i khānān (1556-1627) in Delhi. Photograph by Richard McClary

otherwise of open access, with the city walls probably serving administrative rather than military purposes.<sup>51</sup> In this case, the inhabitants had to paint their houses a uniform colour. Today bright pink is the preferred hue, a feature which enhances the visual impression of Jaipur.

In the Ottoman world by contrast, the construction of most fortifications was due to the command of the sultans and financed by the public treasury. It was uncommon even for a queen mother to take such an initiative on behalf of her son, although Hatice Turhan did sponsor the construction of a Dardanelles fortress.<sup>52</sup> Only in the early 1800s did certain rural magnates of Anatolia build fortified dwellings, most of which have disappeared, probably due to the centralisation drives of the nineteenth century.<sup>53</sup>

Mughal nobles and officials residing within imperial cities seem to have lived in unfortified single-story dwellings (*haveli*) surrounding a courtyard, which permitted a separation of the male and female sections. While perishable

51 Asher and Talbot, *India before Europe*, 211-13.

52 Thys Şenocak, *Ottoman Women Builders*.

53 Ayda Arel, "Gothic Towers and Baroque Mihrabs: The Post-classical Architecture of Aegean Anatolia in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," *Muqarnas* x (1993), 212-8.

materials were in frequent use, in Fatehpur Sikri enough remnants survived for Rezavi to undertake an archaeological investigation.<sup>54</sup> Of special interest are the structures that were probably “official residences” assigned to office holders for the duration of their appointment and later reassigned to their successors. Probably the emperor had ordered and financed these structures, with court artisans doing much of the work – but, to date, this assumption remains hypothetical.

We thus observe a certain consonance between Ottoman and Mughal building practices. In both empires the rulers sought out sites located on hills, shores and riverbanks, using minarets to enhance visibility – in the Mughal case, even on buildings that were not mosques. After all, the Taj Mahal was a mausoleum with the mosque located on its side, while the four minarets surrounding the central dome are an integral part of the mausoleum in the narrow sense of the word. In both domains, the residences even of high-ranking families were much less prominent, often built of wood and other perishable materials, though the owners might enhance their dwellings by painted decorations, which have survived only in exceptional cases. Thus, we do not know whether important office holders might have had their private dwellings designed or decorated by artists who were part of the ateliers of the relevant rulers, so that such residences remain on the margins of the present discussion.

## 2 A Brief Glance: Ottoman and Mughal Figurative Painting in Historiography

While a thorough discussion of this subject goes far beyond the aims of the present chapter and the competence of its author, a few “marginal notes” may be of interest nonetheless. During the past thirty years, many Ottoman art historians have been in constant interchange with their colleagues specialising in political or social history. Thus, they have explored not only the records immediately relevant to the sultans’ ateliers but also chronicles and other writing providing the political contexts for both monumental building and figurative art, or else the occasional absence of these endeavours. Filiz Çağman has written a short but fundamental article on the reasoning behind court sponsorship in the era of Süleyman (r. 1520-66) and his architect Mimar Sinan (c. 1490-1588). Representing a younger generation, Emine Fetvacı and Tülün Değirmenci have focused on the crucial post-Süleymanic period, when Selim II (r. 1566-74) and

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54 Rezavi, *Fathpur Sikri*, 91-118.

Murad III (r. 1574-95) increasingly withdrew from active participation in war and government, leaving these concerns to their servitors.<sup>55</sup>

Consonant with this tendency, Murad III did not directly commission many of the illustrated manuscripts produced during his reign, as his grandfather Süleyman had done a few decades earlier. Rather he often participated vicariously, through the commissions of his viziers and eunuchs, who financed sumptuously illustrated accounts of individual campaigns, rather than of an entire reign and even human history in its entirety, as had been the practice under Sultan Süleyman. In the late 1500s, such illustrated campaign reports typically ended up in the imperial treasury, where, as Fetvacı has pointed out, they served for the education of the palace pages, inculcating loyalty to the sultan in the following generation of office holders.<sup>56</sup> At least as significantly, the dignitaries sponsoring campaign accounts used them to highlight their own career-enhancing achievements.

If the transition from a sultan commanding his troops in person to a political icon hidden in the interior of the palace was already quite difficult, in the years after 1617 the “vital statistics” of the Ottoman dynasty made the shoals of palace politics even harder to navigate. Ahmed I (r. 1603-17) had died before the age of thirty, leaving the succession to a very young prince, who soon made it known that he appreciated storytellers (*meddâh*) and was willing to fund illustrations to adorn his favourite books. Contemporaries apparently experienced the contested succession, brief reign and brutal murder of Osman II (r. 1618-22) as a sequence of regime crises, to which the young monarch reacted by adopting the pose of a great conqueror, although his Polish campaign did not result in any conquests.<sup>57</sup> Other images seem to reflect Osman’s poignant solitude, when his allies had deserted him shortly before his murder. In this context, Değirmenci has pointed out that once Sultan Osman was dead, the public memory as expressed by the *meddâhs* emphasised regrets for the distressing end of a very young man, almost still a child, rather than for the would-be absolutist ruler that Osman had been in his lifetime.<sup>58</sup> One image, however, conveys a contrary message – namely, when Osman appears as a mature, and

55 Filiz Çağman, “Mimar Sinan Döneminde Sarayın Ehl-i Hiref Teşkilatı,” in Zeki Sönmez (ed.), *Mimar Sinan Dönemi Türk Mimarlığı ve Sanatı* (Istanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 1988), 73-7; Emine Fetvacı, *Picturing History at the Ottoman Court* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2013), 44-5; Tülün Değirmenci, *İktidar Oyunları ve Resimli Kitaplar: 11. Osman Devrinde Değişen Güç Sembolleri* (Istanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2012). My heartfelt thanks to Tülay Artan for giving me a copy of Çağman’s article.

56 Fetvacı, *Picturing History*, 29-33.

57 Değirmenci, *İktidar Oyunları*, 262; Baki Tezcan, “The 1622 Military Rebellion in Istanbul: A Historiographical Journey,” *International Journal of Turkish Studies*, 8, no. 1-2 (2002), 27.

58 Değirmenci, *İktidar Oyunları*, 326, 330.

even middle-aged, man together with his councillors.<sup>59</sup> Perhaps the artist had received a commission to depict Osman as the timeless representative of the sultanate, rather than the teenager that he was in real life. Historians of Ottoman painting have thus emphasised the political quality of this imagery, and its attendant use for purveying comforting illusions, both features almost impossible to separate from the genre in the years before and after 1600.

By contrast, in her work on seventeenth-century albums, which were available commercially and often contained miniatures less sophisticated than imagery produced for the sultan's court, Tülün Değirmenci has highlighted gender concerns.<sup>60</sup> In sixteenth-century Ottoman miniatures, women had appeared with some frequency only in images illustrating Iranian-style romantic poetry; thus, the painters had little reason to engage with the real world. Even so, beginning in the 1600s, some miniaturists depicted women in scenes from urban life, sometimes together with their lovers. Değirmenci has suggested that Istanbul artists did not produce these images and albums exclusively for foreign visitors to the Ottoman capital, as one might deduce from the current locations of these manuscripts, all in Latin Europe. Likely, a certain number of these images were the property of well to do Istanbul males, intent on enjoying life despite the difficulties of the time: The pictures at issue may have illustrated tales of the kind relayed by professional storytellers. Sadly, for the outsiders that we are, the back-stories of these images often remain mysterious.

However, political and social or moral messages, while important, are not the only issues treated by Ottoman historians of painting. During the reign of Murad III (r. 1574-95), the palace commissioned an illustrated biography of the Prophet Muḥammad, consisting of six volumes and thus comparable to the illustrations showing Ottoman dynastic history as a world-historical phenomenon that were once ordered by Sultan Süleyman. In a volume authored collectively by Serpil Bağcı, Filiz Çağman, Günsel Renda and Zeren Tanındı, there is a special chapter on this work, which stresses that the stories featuring in these volumes all illustrate the work of Mustafa Darir (fl. c. 1400), a poet originally from Erzurum but working in Mamluk Egypt.<sup>61</sup> Darir, who wrote in Turkish, focused on episodes that were legendary rather than attested in canonical sources, and which perhaps for this reason had never been the subject of illustration before. The miniatures showed the Prophet Muḥammad not merely as a holy figure but as a military leader as well. Thus, the Prophet often

59 Ibid., 175.

60 Tülün Değirmenci, "Introduction: Evolution of the Bazaar Painting and Metin And," in Tülün Değirmenci and Sabri Koz (eds.), *Metin And: Ottoman Figurative Arts 2: Bazaar Painters*, translated by Feyza Howell (Istanbul: Yapı ve Kredi Yayınları, 2018), 11-42, at 20-25.

61 Serpil Bağcı, Filiz Çağman, Günsel Renda and Zeren Tanındı, *Osmanlı Resim Sanatı* (Ankara: Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2006), 157-63.

appeared to resemble Ottoman conquering sultans, and the battles of his son-in-law 'Ali against a dragon further enhanced the quality of this work as an adventure story, which was to entertain as well as to instruct.

Geographical images are a specifically Ottoman form of miniature. The maps adorning the collection of Mediterranean *portolan* maps authored by the admiral Piri Reis (d. 1553) included vignettes of Venice and Genoa, which by the sixteenth century had become available in Istanbul.<sup>62</sup> Moreover, the scholarly courtier Matrakçı Nasuh illustrated the overland route followed by the army of Sultan Süleyman on its way to the conquest of previously Safavid Iraq, making a routine list of stopping points into a set of images midway between maps and illustrations.<sup>63</sup> Matrakçı's depiction of Istanbul, made before the construction of most of the great sultanic mosques, has particularly intrigued current scholars.<sup>64</sup> Throughout, these images have inspired reflections on how Ottoman intellectuals handled the enlargement of the known world, at a time when Portuguese fleets operating in the Indian Ocean threatened the Egyptian spice trade, and Spanish armies began the conquest of the Americas.<sup>65</sup> For at the same time, in the eyes of an Ottoman official Istanbul was the centre of the world, and at the time he would not have seen any reason for changing this perception.

While to present-day scholars, Ottoman geographical illustrations may appear as a bridge between the history of art and the history of science, the depictions of two great artisan parades, taking place at Istanbul court festivities in 1582 and 1720 respectively, interest historians of art and those concerned with society as well. A relatively large archival and literary documentation on both festivities helps scholars to interpret the images so that they can, for instance, discuss the manner in which Ottoman artisans presented themselves to the elite.<sup>66</sup> At the same time, the craftspeople depicted were the subject of

62 Svat Soucek, *Piri Reis and Turkish Mapmaking after Columbus* (London: Nour Foundation, 1992).

63 Hüseyin Gazi Yurdaydın (ed.), *Naşühü's-silâhî (Matrakçı): Beyân-ı Menâzil-i Sefer-i İrakeyn-i Sultân Süleymân Hân* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1976).

64 Walter B. Denny, "A Sixteenth-Century Architectural Plan of Istanbul," *Ars Orientalis*, 8 (1970), 49-63.

65 Pınar Emiralioğlu, *Geographical Knowledge and Imperial Culture in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (Farnham and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014).

66 Nurhan Atasoy, *1582 Surname-i hümayun: An Imperial Celebration* (Istanbul: Koçbank, 1997); Esin Atıl, *Levni and the Surnâme: The Story of an Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Festival* (Istanbul: Koçbank, 1999); Sinem Erdoğan İşkorkutan, "The 1720 Imperial Festival in Istanbul: Festivity and Representation in the Early Eighteenth-century Ottoman Empire," unpublished PhD dissertation, Boğaziçi University, 2017; Suraiya Faroqhi, "The Parades of Ottoman Guildsmen: Self-assertion and Submission to the Sultan's Command," in Andreas Tacke (ed.), *Material Culture – Präsenz und Sichtbarkeit von Künstlern, Zünften*

manipulation, namely by the artists serving the very same elite. In consequence, the poverty and indeed misery that was the lot of many ordinary artisans does not appear in these colourful images.

Into this interconnected complex of historical studies concerning Ottoman miniatures, Begüm Özden Fırat has introduced a completely different perspective. For this author regards art-historical studies only as a preliminary to the encounter of present-day viewers with the miniatures produced in the 1600s and 1700s, incidentally the period favoured by Fırat as well as by Artan.<sup>67</sup> Put differently, for Fırat, the political, social, religious and geographical meanings of Ottoman miniatures, the main concerns of her art-historical colleagues, decidedly take second place. For she analyses these miniatures in the light of twentieth- and twenty-first-century art criticism, informed by cultural theory as developed by Walter Benjamin, Roland Barthes and Gilles Deleuze. As apart from a few exhibitions, the original miniatures remain invisible, the author focuses on the encounter of present-day viewers with technically reproduced artefacts, a concern first appearing in the work of Benjamin. Fırat suggests that if viewers take the time to think about what they are seeing, their encounters with Ottoman artwork have the power to destabilise viewing habits and make miniatures relevant to people interested in contemporary art. Viewers willing to think about the “difficult” relationship between text and illustration are most likely to regard miniatures as relevant to their own modes of seeing. While the approaches suggested by Fırat are frequent among art critics studying European paintings, the application of these concepts to Ottoman miniatures is quite a novelty.

As far as I can see, for art historians working on Mughal painting connoisseurship and the manner of depicting reality are two central concerns, while political messages, socio-political “lessons” and geographical interests seem less important. In part, present-day historians presumably find Mughal connoisseurship so intriguing because the Emperor Jahāngīr was proud of his appreciation of artistic merit, emphasising his ability to recognise the work of an individual painter at a mere glance. Both this ruler and his father Akbar bestowed flowery titles such as “[the] Unique of the age” on the painters whom they particularly esteemed.<sup>68</sup> It is noteworthy that the Ottoman sultans did not accord any titles emphasising artistic merit. Some artists did rise in the

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*und Bruderschaften in der Vormoderne/ Presence and Visibility of Artists, Guilds, Brotherhoods in the Premodern Era* (Petersberg, Germany: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2018), 157-73.

67 Begüm Özden Fırat, *Encounters with the Ottoman Miniature: Contemporary Readings of an Imperial Art* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2015).

68 Som Prakash Verma, “The Tulip (ca. 1621): A Study by Mansur,” in idem, *Interpreting Mughal Painting: Essays in Art, Society and Culture* (Delhi: Oxford University Press of India, 2009), 44.

bureaucracy and even became pashas, but there is no indication that they received these promotions due to their paintings rather than because of their military and administrative capabilities.<sup>69</sup>

In addition, the incidence of signed paintings in the Mughal world has encouraged historians, including Som Prakash Verma, to focus on the stylistic characteristics of celebrated artists, in particular the seventeenth-century luminary Ustād Manṣūr. Following up on the problems posed by ambiguous signatures, Verma has even tried to sort out the works of several artists who, confusingly, all share the name of Farrukh.<sup>70</sup> In a similar mode, the work of John Seyller on the patronage of ‘Abd al-Raḥīm Khān-i Khānān (1556-1627) concentrates on the identities of individual painters and their professional moves, from the imperial workshops to those of the Khān-i Khānān, and sometimes in the opposite direction.<sup>71</sup> In this context, it bears remembering that in the Ottoman world, painters usually accessed the palace after having enjoyed the prior sponsorship of a high official.<sup>72</sup>

At the same time, the relationship of Mughal painting to contemporary material life is a favourite topic of Verma’s, who had probably developed this interest when teaching in Aligarh as a colleague of Irfan Habib and Shireen Moosvi. After all, these latter historians have a strong interest in using Mughal miniatures as windows providing a view of ordinary life. Admittedly, recent historians of the pictorial arts tend to downplay this approach, considering it naïve and focusing instead on the conventions of miniature painting, which necessarily limit what the images can show. However, viewing miniatures as testimonies to material life remains important for other historians of Mughal art as well. Thus, the historian-cum-archaeologist Syed Ali Nadim Rezavi has focused on the appearance of people whom European observers frequently considered absent from the Indian scene altogether, namely men neither rich nor poor and exercising a profession which permitted a lifestyle that may not have been luxurious but was still reasonably comfortable.<sup>73</sup> Whatever the degree of “real-

69 On the career of Kalender Paşa, see Bağcı, Çağman, Renda and Tanındı, *Osmanlı Resim Sanatı*, 192-4, 228-30; and Serpil Bağcı, “Presenting *Vaṣṣāl* Kalender’s Works: The Prefaces of Three Ottoman Albums,” *Muqarnas* 30 (2013), 255-313.

70 Som Prakash Verma, “Problems of Namesakes and their Identity: Farrukh, Farrukh *Kalan*, Farrukh *Khawurd*, Farrukh *Chela*, Farrukh Beg,” in idem. *Interpreting Mughal Painting*, 51-68.

71 John Seyller, *Workshop and Patron in Mughal India: The Freer Ramayana and Other Illustrated manuscripts of Abd al-Rahim (Artibus Asiae 42)* (Zurich: Museum Rietberg, 1999), 50-4.

72 Kazan, *Sarayın Sanatı Himayesi*, 42.

73 Syed Ali Nadeem Rezavi, “Representations of Middle Class Professionals in Mughal Visual Art,” in Ishrat Alam and Syeed Eyaz Hussain (eds), *The Varied Facets of History: Essays in Honour of Aniruddha Ray* (Delhi: Primus Books, 2011), 159-94.



ism” that was possible to Mughal painters, some of these artists did in fact show details of village and town life mostly absent from the work of their Ottoman counterparts, including emaciated bullocks working village fields.<sup>74</sup>

Neither Som Prakash Verma nor John Seyller has shown a great deal of interest in the political background of Mughal paintings. By contrast, Ebba Koch has written about the depiction of hierarchy, an organising principle of court life, in Mughal miniatures painted during the reign of Shāh Jahān.<sup>75</sup> Intriguingly, Koch does not limit her discussion to palace sites, where courtiers arranged in perfect symmetry confronted the enthroned emperor. She includes outdoor scenes as well, emphasising the latent conflict between depicting courtly hierarchy in a “politically correct” manner and the realistic rendition of people and landscape.

Landscape images were key sites for the creativity of courtly painters, for when consummate artists created pictures featuring naturalistic imagery the courtly hierarchy that was the main subject of their works appeared to be “real” rather than a mere figment of the imagination. Had matters been otherwise, cynical observers might well have regarded these carefully ranked dignitaries as creations of fiction. At the same time, the constraints within which Mughal painters worked limited their artistic freedom, as skill in landscape painting could not interfere with the depiction of hierarchically organised court ceremonies. This consideration explains why the artists favoured by Shāh Jahān tended to miniaturise their landscapes while at the same time, rendering “nature” with the utmost finesse. Koch’s argumentation is especially intriguing because the author combines the political concerns noted in the work of Fetvacı and, especially, Değirmenci with the emphasis on connoisseurship and realism so typical of Verma.

In recent years, Ottoman and Mughal art historians have found common ground in the study of albums compiled for certain seventeenth-century rulers, including Sultan Ahmed I and Jahāngīr. For Fetvacı and Bağcı, the prestige that the compilation of albums from samples of calligraphy and paintings gained in the early seventeenth century is not a sign of artistic and/or political decline.<sup>76</sup> Rather, the interest in albums among the palace elite indicates a shift towards communication among viewers who come together to focus on details found on a given album page and relate their observations to details on other pages in the same volume, or even in different volumes altogether.

74 Som Prakash Verma, “Ordinary Life in Mughal India: A survey of Mughal painting,” in idem, *Interpreting Mughal Painting*, 157-73.

75 Ebba Koch, “The Hierarchical Principles of Shah-Jahani Painting,” in idem, *Mughal Art and Imperial Ideology* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001), 130-62.

76 Emine Fetvacı, “Enriched Narratives and Empowered Images in Seventeenth-century Ottoman Manuscripts,” *Ars Orientalis* 40 (2011), 243-66; and Bağcı, “Presenting.”

### 3 Financing: Pious Foundations vs. Grants from the Imperial Treasury

No political statement is possible without spending money, and for the support of mosques and other charities Ottoman patrons normally instituted pious foundations (*vakıf*).<sup>77</sup> To do so, the patron formally declared that he/she wished to benefit “the servants of God” (*‘ibādullāh*) by establishing a mosque, fountain or hospital. To allow the charity to function, he/she assigned it a source of revenue in perpetuity, often real estate but sometimes money that the administrators of the foundation were to lend out at (moderate) interest. The formal document instituting the *vakıf*, called *vakfiyye* or *vakıfnāme*, recorded both the charities at issue and the revenue sources, setting down the conditions (*şart-ı vākıf*) by which the administrators should abide, in principle for all time. The *şart-ı vākıf* enumerated the beneficiaries and recorded the salaries payable to the employees and administrators as well. Certainly, the sultans of the late eighteenth century and into the nineteenth century often siphoned off *vakıf* revenues to pay for current expenditures. Even so, the existence of pious foundations, firmly anchored in Islamic law, contributed to the survival of a sizeable number of mosques, madrasas, covered markets and public baths in those parts of the Ottoman empire that ultimately became modern Turkey.

To mention just one prominent example, the patronage of the grand vizier Sokollu Mehmed Paşa (1504-79) and his family consisted of two mosque complexes in Istanbul, in addition to a smaller complex on the outskirts of the capital. Furthermore, the grand vizier sponsored a gigantic compound consisting of a mosque and caravansaries in the Thracian village of Burgaz, which this patronage transformed into a small town, now named Lüleburgaz.<sup>78</sup> The same patron financed a bridge in the Serbian region whence his family had originated, while a relative, who was governor of Baghdad before the armies of Shah ‘Abbās I (r. 1588-1629) temporarily took back the city, employed local talent to produce a group of illustrated manuscripts.<sup>79</sup> Moreover the Sokollus

77 The literature on pious foundations is enormous. For the Ottoman case, see Randi Deguilhem, “Wakf in the Ottoman Empire,” *Encyclopaedia of Islam*<sup>2</sup> (Leiden: Brill, 1960-2005).

78 Erhan Afyoncu, “Sokullu Mehmed Paşa, sadrazam,” in *Türkiye Dîyânet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, <<https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/sokullu-mehmed-pasa>> (accessed on 10 February 2020).

79 Rachel Milstein, *Miniature Painting in Ottoman Baghdad* (Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda Publishers, 1989).

were but one of several munificent and influential vizier families.<sup>80</sup> Unfortunately, in the new nation states of the Balkans, Ottoman structures were, and to some extent still are, under threat, viewed as symbols of an “oriental” domination that the political class of Greece or Bulgaria wished to erase from memory.

In the Mughal world by contrast, pious foundations certainly existed, but never became as ubiquitous as grants from the central treasury were. While, for example, Akbar financed a splendid mosque and, at a later stage, a marble mausoleum for the Chishtī shaykh Salīm who had predicted the birth of the emperor’s first son, the administration lay in the hands of the imperial treasury. Thus, these resources did not become the appanage of the shaykh’s descendants, who would have been the probable administrators in the Ottoman context. Furthermore, while the great complex of the Taj Mahal in Agra collected donations and village dues in its treasury, the accountants administered these funds in close contact with their colleagues attached to the central treasury. Seemingly, the latter made the final decisions about the expenditures necessary for the upkeep of the complex.<sup>81</sup> Quite probably, the lack of revenue sources sanctioned by the sharia or some other universally recognised code of law made Mughal building vulnerable once the empire began to disintegrate. Even so, some pious foundations flourished, with the Naqshbandī order of dervishes a frequent beneficiary.

#### 4 Paying Court: Artists and Artisans

Connections between patrons and the artists/artisans in their service were not usually market-mediated, although the workpeople certainly received financial remunerations. Documenting the situation at the Mughal court, there survive three assignments of revenue to a dyer in the imperial service named Rāmdās, his name indicating that he was a Hindu.<sup>82</sup> The document dates to 1561-62, in the early years of Akbar’s rule, when he had just emancipated himself from the tutelage of his regent Bayrām Khān. By the time of issuance, the dyer apparently lived in a locality in the district of Agra, but we do not know whether he worked, or had previously worked, on site in the Agra court workshops or whether he took away textiles to dye in his own atelier.

80 Tūlay Artan, “The Kadirga Palace Shrouded by the Mists of Time,” *Turcica* 21 (1994), 55-124.

81 Rajeev Kinra, *Writing Self, Writing Empire: Chandar Bhan Brahman and the Cultural World of the Indo-Persian State Secretary* (Delhi: Primus Books, 2016), 56-9.

82 Irfan Habib, “Three Early Farmāns of Akbar, in Favour of Rāmdās, the Master Dyer,” in idem (ed.), *Akbar and his India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press 2010), 270-87.

In 1561, Rāmdās received an assignment of salary (*dar wājḥ-i 'alūfa*, compare with *ber vech-i ulūfe* in Ottoman Turkish) from villages in the Agra area, which either no longer exist or else have changed their names.<sup>83</sup> Remarkably, the first grant to the dyer called him a *jāigīrdār*, a term later simplified to *jāgīrdār*, which referred to recipients of imperial revenue grants, sometimes members of the highest nobility. However, in the next year the financial administration probably abrogated this grant, and Rāmdās now received another one, termed *in'ām* – once again, the term had the same meaning in the Ottoman world. Apparently, the (former) dyer owned a substantial amount of land as well, so that he was probably quite wealthy. Unfortunately, we do not know whether he had acquired the land from his savings while in court employment or whether this level of wealth was common among artisans in Mughal palace service. After retirement, and perhaps even when senile, Rāmdās continued to enjoy the support of the emperor, and could recover a debt that otherwise would likely have remained unpaid. Imperial patronage thus involved indirect benefits as well.

With respect to payments to Ottoman artists/artisans working for the court, we know of the monetary gifts accorded these men when the ruler decided to be munificent, perhaps at a dynastic festivity. On such occasions, “gift exchanges” were de rigueur: while artists and artisans made presents that might be, but were not necessarily, samples of their work, the ruler might reciprocate through a counter-gift. While Hilal Kazan has stressed that the sultan acted out of his own free will and munificence, rather than due to any obligation on his part, the outcome was still that the artist/artisan enjoying the ruler’s patronage gave a gift to the monarch and received something in return.<sup>84</sup> In fact, by the time of Sultan Süleyman, only those people that had previously presented gifts were eligible for the sultan’s bounty.<sup>85</sup> Similar customs existed in the 1700s, although by that time, the number of artisans on the regular palace payroll had diminished quite sharply.

At the festival of 1720, the carpenters, painters, designers and others producing the candy gardens (*şeker bahçeleri*) and decorated poles (*nahıls*) on show received monetary rewards in appreciation of their work, which was always a major attraction at weddings and circumcisions.<sup>86</sup> Furthermore, the sultan issued robes of honour (*hil'at*) to a few high-ranking artisans, including the chief master goldsmith (*kuyumcubaşı*). As Amanda Phillips has shown, the benefi-

83 Ibid., 271.

84 Kazan, *Sarayın Sanatı Himayesi*, 17.

85 Ibid., 42-4.

86 Erdoğan İşkorkutan, “1720 Imperial Festival,” 206.

ciaries might sell these textiles, although the number of artisan recipients of *hil'ats* was too small for the trade in these items to have had any economic significance.<sup>87</sup> Moreover, while the documents discovered and analysed by Sinem Erdoğan İşkorkutan contain extensive information on the “customary” gifts that the guildsmen of Istanbul presented to the sultan, the author seems to have found little evidence on the money and/or goods bestowed by the sultan upon these modest artisans. After all, Ahmed III had a reputation for keeping his treasury well filled.

However, most of the information on payment comes from the *ehl-i hiref* defterleri, now studied by an array of scholars.<sup>88</sup> As the employment records show, these masters received salaries and sometimes successful artisans/artists enjoyed supplementary benefits, on record in special registers, the so-called *in'amât defterleri*. In the mid-1500s, tailors in palace employment received daily wages ranging between 6 and 12.5 *akçe*.<sup>89</sup> In the mid-eighteenth century, these artisans received roughly the same number of coins.<sup>90</sup> However, given the dramatic devaluation of the currency during the past two centuries, the 7-10 *akçe* per day received by palace tailors of the 1700s could probably not support a family. As we have no data on the earnings of tailors or shoemakers working for the market, we cannot determine whether workpeople employed by the sultan enjoyed significant advantages over their colleagues without pal-

87 Amanda Phillips, “Ottoman Hil'at: Between Commodity and Charisma,” in Marios Hadjiannastasis (ed.), *Frontiers of the Ottoman Imagination: Studies in Honour of Rhoads Murphey* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 11-38.

88 İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, “Osmanlı Sarayında Ehl-i Hiref (Sanatkârlar) Defteri,” *Belgeler* 11 (1981-86), 23-76; Çağman, “Ehl-i Hiref Teşkilatı”; Bahattin Yaman, *Osmanlı Saray Sanatkârları: 18. Yüzyılda Ehl-i Hiref* (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2008); Kazan, *Sarayın Sanatı Himayesi*; Fatih Özdemir, “TSMA D. 10010 Nolu Ehi-i hiref Defterine göre Osmanlı Saray Sanatkârları,” *Akademik Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi/Asos Journal* 5, no. 53 (2017), 534-58. Two unpublished MA theses are relevant as well: Sakine Akcan Ekici, “III. Mehmed Döneminde 1596-1601 Tarihleri arası Ehl-i hiref Defterlerine göre Sanatkârlar,” Istanbul University, 2013; and Neslihan Süleyman, “XVII. Yüzyıl Başlarında Osmanlı Devleti'nde Saray Sanatkârları (TSMA d. 1435 ve MAD 7443 Numaralı Defterlerin Değerlendirilmesi),” Gazi Üniversitesi, Ankara, 2015. My thanks go to Tülay Arter for generously providing copies of the works of Özdemir, Akcan Ekinci and Süleyman. In addition, there is the *uzmanlık* thesis (equivalent to an MA in Departments of Fine Art) of Pelin (Filiz) Bozcu, “Osmanlı Sarayında Sanatçı ve Zanaatçı Teşkilatı Ehl-i hiref”. This thesis introduces the secondary literature available at the time of acceptance in 2010 (Mimar Sinan Güzel Sanatlar Üniversitesi, Istanbul), <[https://www.academia.edu/30252738/OSMANLI\\_SARAYINDA\\_SANAT%C3%87I\\_ve\\_ZANAAT%C3%87I\\_TE%C5%9EK%C4%B0LATI\\_EHL-%C4%B0\\_H%C4%B0REF](https://www.academia.edu/30252738/OSMANLI_SARAYINDA_SANAT%C3%87I_ve_ZANAAT%C3%87I_TE%C5%9EK%C4%B0LATI_EHL-%C4%B0_H%C4%B0REF)> (accessed on 10 February 2020).

89 Bahattin Yaman, *Sarayın Terzileri: 16-18. Yüzyıl Osmanlı Hassa Kıyafet Birimleri* (Istanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2018), 27.

90 Yaman, *Sarayın Terzileri*, 27.

ace affiliations. Remarkably, some of the best-known artists did not appear in the registers of palace artisans at all, but held military and/or administrative positions or perhaps had private means.<sup>91</sup>

## 5 The Functioning of Court Workshops: What Do the Documents Tell Us, and What Do They Omit?

Artists producing Ottoman illustrated manuscripts in the early and mid-sixteenth century seem to have acted mostly under the sultan's direct command. However, as noted, by the reign of Murad III it became customary for high-level officials to order illustrated manuscripts to present to the monarch, presumably after financing the work out of their own resources.<sup>92</sup> We do not know how such an officeholder selected the artists he employed: Did he consult the sultan? Or else, did he act on his own initiative, employing a man perhaps recommended by friends and colleagues? Furthermore, the Ottoman court received artwork produced outside of the Ottoman borders, often as diplomatic gifts. Illustrated manuscripts and silks from the Safavid court enjoyed high esteem, as is apparent from the sheer fact of their survival in the Topkapı Palace collections.<sup>93</sup> Gifts of European artwork seem to have survived in smaller numbers: for instance, the Habsburgs of the sixteenth century renamed the tribute which they owed to the sultan for their Hungarian possessions "presents to the Turks" (*Türkenverehrung*). Made of silver, these items must have gone to the mint in very short order.<sup>94</sup> While the impact of Iranian painting is clearly apparent from Ottoman miniatures, there is no parallel to the intensive study of European imagery in the Mughal palace.

As for the Mughals, Akbar, Jahāngīr and Shāh Jahān all sponsored numerous illustrated manuscripts, and the artists involved frequently signed their work. As the emperors accepted this practice, they clearly did not wish to hide the employment of both Muslims and non-Muslims in their ateliers. While the first "artistic directors" hired by Akbar were two Iranians, who had found jobs

91 For example: Değirmenci, *İktidar Oyunları*, 74 (on Kalender Paşa, d. 1616) and 145-6 (on Mehmed b Abdulgani Nadiri, who became an army judge of Rumeli).

92 Fetvacı, *Picturing History*.

93 Mohammad Reza Mehrandish, İlber Ortaylı, et al. (eds), *Onbin Yıllık İran Medeniyeti, İkibin Yıllık Ortak Miras* [Exhibition] (Istanbul: National Museum of Iran and T.C. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2009).

94 On clockwork, a special case, see Gottfried Mraz, "Die Rolle der Uhrwerke in der kaiserlichen Türkenverehrung im 16. Jahrhundert," in Klaus Maurice and Otto Mayr (eds), *Die Welt als Uhr; Deutsche Uhren und Automaten 1550-1650* (Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1980), 39-54.

in Agra after Shah Ṭahmāsp I (r. 1524-76) had closed his painting workshop, many of the artists recruited later were Hindus, as is apparent from their names. Moreover, in the Mughal palace, artists and officials acknowledged that design and colouring were often the responsibility of different people, so that the relevant miniatures typically contain two signatures. While practices were quite possibly similar in the Ottoman workshops, artists or officials made no mention of this fact. Thus, identifying artists was probably a less urgent concern in Istanbul than it was in Agra.

No buildings housing craft workshops serving the court have survived in Istanbul or in the various imperial, sub- or post-Mughal capitals of northern India. We thus have to reconstruct procedures from miniatures showing the production of a few valuable items. Unfortunately, such images may highlight “noble” activities such as the preparation of a book or the construction of an imperial city, but rarely include humble crafts such as the washing and ironing of clothes, or even shoemaking, although people doing these jobs were part of the palace workshops too.<sup>95</sup>

Thus, we have to consider what a given author or courtly tradition regarded as worth recording. Akbar was famous for inspecting imperial construction sites in person, and there survives a miniature showing the emperor when engaged in this pursuit.<sup>96</sup> In addition, Akbar involved himself so closely in the activities of the gun-making workshop attached to his palace that his chronicler Abū'l-Faẓl even attributed a technical invention to the monarch. Up to that time, a gun barrel had consisted of a rolled-up metal sheet soldered together, but guns of this make exploded quite easily. Supposedly, Akbar had the idea of forming the gun barrel out of a spiral of sheet metal, a solution which made the gun much safer to use.<sup>97</sup> Intriguingly, in Europe people generally attributed this invention to the Ottomans, and in the 1600s and 1700s, wealthy Europeans sometimes had their locally manufactured guns fitted with Ottoman-made barrels.<sup>98</sup> At this point, we may wonder whether the invention occurred twice with the inventors unaware of each other, or whether the novelty spread either eastward or westward. Whatever the truth may be, Abū'l-Faẓl's claim that Akbar had contributed to technical progress in gun manufacture was only possible in a setting in which people considered it normal for a monarch to visit workshops and gain information about current techniques. In the

95 On painting, see Rogers, *Mughal miniatures*, 18-26.

96 Rezavi, *Fathpur Sikri*, 22 refers to this image.

97 Irfan Habib, *Technology in Medieval India, c. 650-1750* (Delhi: Tulika Books and Aligarh Historians Society, 2008).

98 Robert Elgood, *The Arms of Greece and her Balkan Neighbours in the Ottoman Period* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2009), 80-1.

Ottoman orbit, many princes learned a craft when young and retained an interest in it when they grew up. Moreover, at least in certain reigns a visit to the imperial treasury with its many striking artefacts was part of courtly ritual. Some sultans visited the construction sites of the mosques that they had sponsored, with the young Ahmed I (r. 1603-17) a prime example.<sup>99</sup>

In the sixteenth century, many designs used in Ottoman decorative arts seemingly originated in a central workshop known as the *nak̄k̄āshāne*.<sup>100</sup> However, we do not know exactly how a newly invented design spread, as potters, fabric designers or wood carvers took it up, only to abandon it after a decade or two, as Nurhan Atasoy and Julian Raby have demonstrated for the sixteenth-century tableware “made in İznik”.<sup>101</sup> Did the artists/artisans obey orders “from above”? Or else, were the purchasers of these fine and costly pieces aware of current palace fashions? In the latter case, they may have wanted to place less elaborate versions of these luxuries in their own reception rooms. As documentation on İznik-ware is rather sparse, we may never know for sure; but from the study of the many surviving estate inventories undertaken to date, it does appear that the possession of certain luxury goods, not necessarily İznik-ware, was a requirement for an office holder wishing to assert his privileged status.<sup>102</sup> Such men may well have wanted to emulate palace fashions.

The Mughal emperors possessed numerous workshops (*kārkhāna*) to produce high-quality goods, quite apart from the building activities that they sponsored in addition. Presumably, when an emperor began a construction project, he first employed the men already in his ateliers, with additional workpeople hired according to need. Moreover, high-level commanders such as the *khān-i khānān* might act as patrons in their own right (see Figure 10.4).<sup>103</sup>

Mughal artwork and the ateliers producing it became models for princes (once) subordinate to the emperors, and these models remained valid long after the empire had faded away.<sup>104</sup> To mention just one example, the Kachhwha rajah of Jaipur, while remaining Hindus, shared in Mughal court culture to such an extent that they asked for paintings from Agra and Delhi for their art-

99 Fetvacı, “Enriched Narratives,” at 245.

100 Çağman, *Osmanlı Sarayı Tasvir Sanatı*.

101 Nurhan Atasoy and Julian Raby, *Iznik, the Pottery of Ottoman Turkey* (Istanbul/London: Türkiye Ekonomi Bankası and Alexandria Press, 1989), 76-144.

102 Amanda Phillips, “Ali Paşa and His Stuff: An Ottoman Household in Istanbul and Van,” in Elif Akçetin and Suraiya Faroqhi (eds), *Living the Good Life: Consumption in the Qing and Ottoman Empires of the Eighteenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 90-112.

103 Eva Orthmann, *Abd or-Rahim Han-e Hanan (964-1036 / 1556-1627): Staatsmann und Mäzen* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 1996); Seyller, *Workshop and Patron*.

104 On the 1700s, see B.N. Goswamy, *The Spirit of Indian Painting: Close Encounters with 101 Great Works 1100-1900* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2016), 12-19.





FIGURE 10.5 Agra fort. Photograph by Suraiya Faroqhi

ists to study, and around 1900, one court painter produced a portrait of Aurangzeb, some 200 years after the death of this controversial emperor.<sup>105</sup> Furthermore, the Kachhwaha princes adopted the Mughal custom of legitimising royal succession by group depictions of their ancestors. For the Mughals, Temür (1336-1405) was the subject of such images together with his Indian descendants, beginning with Bābur (r. 1526-30). In such miniatures, the current monarch often took his place in the foreground.<sup>106</sup> Incidentally, Mughal artists favoured gatherings (*majlis*) that permitted some interaction between the rulers depicted, as opposed to the Ottoman custom of showing every ruler in isolation. The Kachhwahas produced a variant of the Mughal version, sponsoring depictions of *majlis* featuring the numerous ancestors of the current prince.

Despite several differences in detail, many Mughal and Kachhwaha practices were quite similar. Historians studying the functioning of court workshops

105 Sonika Soni, "Glories of the Suratkhana: Two Centuries of Painting at the Jaipur Court," in Giles Tillotson and Mrinalini Venkateswaran (eds), *Painting and Photography at the Jaipur Court* (New Delhi: Nyogi Books and Maharaja Sawai Singh II Museum Trust, 2016), 54.

106 For an example in the Victoria and Albert Museum, painted by the Mughal artist Gowardhan around 1630, see <<http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O17093/timur-babur-and-humayun-painting-gowardhan>> (accessed on 10 February 2020). The same image appears in Susan Strong, *Painting for the Mughal Emperor: The Art of the Book 1560-1660* (London: V&A Publications, 2002), 150. For the Kachhwaha versions, see Soni, "Glories," 43.

thus often consider that in certain respects, the archives and collections of the Kachhwaha court can “stand in” for their Mughal counterparts, now largely lost.<sup>107</sup> After all, in the Jaipur collections, quite a few courtly productions have survived on site, while the plundering of Delhi by Nādir Shāh (1739), the Afghans (1757), and, ultimately, by the British in 1857 resulted in dispersal and immense destruction.<sup>108</sup> By contrast, the Kachhwahas made their peace with the British when the latter had become a powerful force, thus retaining their collections and even augmenting them.

The Kachhwahas were but one of several sub-Mughal and post-Mughal princes who patronised local artists who had at least in part assimilated Mughal styles. Similar to the Kachhwahas, the Paharis of Punjab were Rajputs – put differently, Hindu warrior princes – who sponsored manuscript illustrations with topics taken from Hindu mythology.<sup>109</sup> Apparently, the eighteenth century was the time in which the most impressive masters in this genre were at work. Many Punjabi princes did not set up court ateliers but relied on the services of artists/artisans, who often followed the same trade from father to son, a custom common among Ottoman palace artisans as well.<sup>110</sup> How these provincial painters obtained access to Mughal artwork remains enigmatic. They evidently managed to do so; perhaps a court official acquired paintings from the prince, lent them out and later retrieved them.

Once the Mughal empire disintegrated in the mid-eighteenth century, certain former governors became independent princes in all but in name, and they had high-quality goods manufactured for their own use. The court ateliers of Lucknow are a good example for the patronage of such “post-Mughal” princes.<sup>111</sup> In the last quarter of the eighteenth century, when the East India Company was already a strong force in northern India, the *nawābs* of Lucknow sponsored an architecture derived from Mughal models, but with a “baroque” exuberance differing sharply from the more restrained decoration of Mughal times. Being Shi‘ites, the *nawābs* sponsored elaborate monument complexes known as *imāmbāras*, which included a mosque, a ceremonial site, a water source and elaborately decorated courts and gates, the last-named with relief

107 Sir Jadunath Sarkar, *A History of Jaipur c. 1503-1938*, revised and edited by Raghubir Singh, (Himayatnagar/Hyderabad (India) and Jaipur: Orient Longman and Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II Museum, 1984); Sunbul Halim Khan, *Art and Craft Workshops under the Mughals: A study of Jaipur Karkhanas* (Delhi: Primus Books, 2015).

108 William Dalrymple and Anita Anand, *Koh-i-Noor: The History of the World's Most Infamous Diamond* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017).

109 Goswamy, *The Spirit*, 107-9, 468-83.

110 Kazan, *Sarayın Sanatı Himayesi*, 133.

111 Madhu Trivedi, “Lucknow as a Centre of Art and Culture,” in Y. Sharma and P. Malekandathil (eds), *Cities in Medieval India* (Delhi: Primus Books, 2014), 401-30.

depictions showing large fish, the emblem of the *nawāb* dynasty. Incidentally, even the double-fish symbol had been part of the Mughal court tradition.<sup>112</sup>

## 6 Conclusion

While court workshops producing illustrated manuscripts and other luxury goods existed in the Ottoman, Mughal, sub-Mughal and post-Mughal realms, the Indian ateliers seemingly manufactured many more goods than those of the sultans ever did. Some of the Indian artefacts ultimately entered market circuits, although the details remain nebulous.<sup>113</sup> In a similar vein, the “recycling” of palace goods, including the ubiquitous robes of honour, surely happened in the Ottoman world as well, but the people involved in such deals rarely recorded their transactions. In both venues, artists/artisans received regular payments and bonuses for successful work, although the Ottoman archives provide a somewhat better notion of the income of an artist/artisan working for the sultan. By contrast, it seems that formal recognition of merit was more common in the Mughal palace, where artists more frequently signed their work than was customary in Istanbul. After all, Akbar, Jahāngīr and, to a lesser extent, Shāh Jahān showed their prowess as connoisseurs by rewarding artists, while we do not know whether – apart from Mehmed the Conqueror, Süleyman and Murad III – any Ottoman sultan took a sustained interest in the work of the painters employed by his palace. Certainly, it was not necessary for an Ottoman courtier to be a connoisseur of painting, while for Mughal grandees before the mid-seventeenth century an appreciation of painting was legitimate cultural capital.

The historiography concerning palace workshops reflects these different priorities. Certainly, both Ottoman and Mughal historians agree that the preferences of the monarch were a determinant. Thus, Mughal art historians typically pay little attention to artwork produced after the mid-1600s, given the lack of interest or open disapproval of Aurangzeb. In the Ottoman case, art historians have shown that Murad III left the commissioning of paintings to his advisors, who often hoped that sumptuous histories highlighting their own merits increased their chances of continuing successful careers. On the other hand, when Osman II explicitly chose an abridged translation of the *Shāhnāma* into Ottoman Turkish for illustration, did he wish to emphasise a specific type

<sup>112</sup> For a depiction, see William Dalrymple, *The Last Mughal* (London: Bloomsbury, 2006), following 258.

<sup>113</sup> Halim Khan, *Art and Craft Workshops*, 2.

of monarchy – perhaps, as Baki Tezcan has surmised, the “absolutist” variety favoured by the Iranian tradition?<sup>114</sup> At the present state of our knowledge, it is hard to be sure.

Unlike the approach favoured by Ottoman historians, scholars dealing with the Mughal orbit tend to de-emphasise political concerns and, by contrast, strongly stress painting technique and patronage relations. Moreover, given the dissolution of the Mughal empire already in the mid-1700s, sponsorship and stylistic preferences at post-Mughal courts gain an importance without parallel in the Ottoman context. While the sultans survived the Mughal emperors by several centuries, the artistic legacy that Ottoman grandees left in the (former) provinces was more limited, perhaps partly because the sultans’ elites were less inclined to include non-Muslims in their projects than was true in India. However, with so many unknowns involved, categorical statements would be most unwise. Perhaps future studies will elucidate these problems.

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<sup>114</sup> Baki Tezcan, *The Second Ottoman Empire: Political and Social Transformation in the Early Modern World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 128-32.

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# Mapping the Boundaries of the World: India and the Indian Ocean in the Early Modern Ottoman Geographical Imagination

*Pınar Emiralioğlu*

In one of the earliest accounts on the Indian Ocean,<sup>1</sup> the Ottoman sea captain Piri Reis (d. 1553) narrates the following:

After the Portuguese king died, one of his two sons became the king and the other one traveled to Maghrib to hide. ... Later the prince returned to Portugal to become the king and gathered seamen around him. He told them about an ocean which is full of precious metals and inhabited by black people. He also added that no ships ever sail there. He then commissioned these seamen to find this land. They found the land of the blacks and returned to Portugal. By then the Portuguese king had died. ... More than forty years later, one of these seamen, who was then very old, told the Portuguese king about the Indian Ocean. ... When the new king heard about this, he commissioned the old seaman to set sail to India. This seaman found the land of the Abyssinians and the Cape of Good Hope.<sup>2</sup>

This detailed paragraph on the Portuguese discovery of the Cape of Good Hope is not the only time that Piri Reis refers to the Indian Ocean or the Portuguese activities in the Indian Ocean in his *Kitab-ı Bahriye* (Book of Navigation). A few folios later, he explains how the Portuguese took control of most of the trade everywhere in the Indian Ocean and warns that “[o]n the island of Hormuz, the Portuguese built a castle and they tax every ship that passes by. They

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- 1 For the purposes of this chapter, the “Indian Ocean” refers to the wider Indian Ocean basin including the Persian Gulf and the subcontinent of India, just as the Ottoman geographers observed in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Parts of this chapter have been published in Pınar Emiralioğlu, *Geographical Knowledge and Imperial Culture in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014).
  - 2 Piri Reis, *Kitab-ı Bahriye*, Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library, MS Ayasofya 2612, fols 16a-16b. Piri Reis, *Kitab-ı Bahriye*, ed. E. Zekai Ökte, Vahit Çabuk, Tülay Duran and Robert Bragner (Ankara: Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Turkish Republic, 1988, Vol. 1, 95-7.

learned the region so well that one cannot trade there without the Portuguese.”<sup>3</sup> Piri Reis’s passages offer valuable insights into how Ottoman intellectuals and ruling elites imagined and reconstructed the Indian Ocean for their own imperial purposes.

Historians have long been focusing on the networks of political, intellectual and economic exchanges in the early modern Indian Ocean.<sup>4</sup> While these studies focus, in particular, on the interactions between the local communities in the Indian Ocean and European economic or political representatives, the increasing intensity of political and economic connections between the local communities in the Indian Ocean and the representatives of the Ottoman empire have usually been overlooked. Recently Giancarlo Casale, in his analysis on the *Ottoman Age of Exploration*, underlined the importance of the Indian Ocean for Ottoman imperial ideology in the sixteenth century.<sup>5</sup> This chapter aims to contribute to the historical literature on the Indian Ocean by investigating the ways in which Ottoman intellectuals and ruling elites depicted and located the Indian Ocean in the Ottoman geographical imagination and imperial project in the early modern period. Through a historical analysis of a select body of Ottoman geographical and cartographical works on the Indian Ocean from the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it will also offer preliminary findings on the extent to which Ottoman intellectuals took part in the early modern networks of knowledge exchange and how participation in these networks informed their vision on the Indian Ocean.

In the fifteenth century, the Portuguese circumnavigated Africa and reached the Indian Ocean. These expeditions, which marked the beginning of Portuguese territorial and mercantile expansion in Asia and the Indian Ocean, did not challenge the early modern geographical understanding of the world. In fact, the Portuguese were latecomers to the Indian Ocean. Merchants from the Italian peninsula had frequented Indian ports since ancient times, recording the details of their voyages from the thirteenth century onwards. Following the rapid expansion of Islam in the eighth and ninth centuries, Arab sailors, merchants and travellers frequently ventured into the region and challenged

3 Piri Reis, *Kitab-ı Bahriye*, fol. 33b; Piri Reis, *Kitab-ı Bahriye*, ed. Ökte, et al., Vol. 1, 165.

4 K.N. Chaudhuri, *Trade and Civilization in the Indian Ocean: An Economic History from the Rise of Islam to 1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Sanjay Subrahmanyam, “Connected Histories: Notes towards a Reconfiguration of Early Modern Eurasia,” *Modern Asian Studies* 31 (1997), 735–62; Sanjay Subrahmanyam, “A Note on the Rise of Surat in the Sixteenth Century,” *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 43/1 (2000), 23–33; Fahad Ahmad Bishara, *A Sea of Debt: Law and Economic Life in the Western Indian Ocean, 1780–1950* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017); Jane Hooper, *Feeding Globalization: Madagascar and the Provisioning Trade, 1600–1800* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2017).

5 Giancarlo Casale, *The Ottoman Age of Exploration* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

the Ptolemaic understanding of the Indian Ocean as a landlocked sea. Nevertheless, when Vasco da Gama entered the Indian Ocean in 1498, he opened up new horizons for future European sailors. The impact of this discovery was as important as Columbus's 1493 voyage to the Americas. By unlocking the south-east trade networks, the Portuguese opened some of the world's most lucrative trade routes for the rest of the "Age of Exploration", and ushered in Portuguese overseas expansion.<sup>6</sup> From a European perspective, this development had merit. Yet trade between the Indian Ocean, the Far East and the Mediterranean was a centuries-old phenomenon. What changed after 1498 was the shipping route.

The Portuguese territories in the Indian Ocean and in India soon became a source of controversy between Portugal and Spain.<sup>7</sup> In 1481, the papal bull *Aeterni Regis* designated the regions south of the Canaries and west of Africa as exclusively Portuguese. In 1493, another papal bull granted Spain sovereignty over the territories discovered (or to be discovered) by Columbus. The status of Africa and India remained unclear. In 1494, with the treaty of Tordesillas, Africa and Asia were allocated to the Portuguese, and the western oceanic island world was allocated to Spain. By the 1520s, new geographical discoveries required the extension of the Tordesillas line around the globe. In 1529, Spain and Portugal negotiated a treaty in Saragossa that allowed the Spice Islands to be shifted summarily to either side of the line in future negotiations.<sup>8</sup> The cartographers responsible for collating knowledge on new geographies played crucial roles in the settlement of these controversies.<sup>9</sup>

The Portuguese crown was aware of the practical and symbolic value of cartographic accounts, especially world maps, in articulating its imperial claims. As early as the fifteenth century, it established institutions to regulate overseas trade and administration in India, and employed cartographers to oversee map production and nautical science.<sup>10</sup> The *Armazém da Guiné e Índia*, which al-

6 Felipe Fernández-Armesto, "Portuguese Expansion in a Global Context," in Francisco Bethencourt and Diogo Ramada Curto (eds), *Portuguese Oceanic Expansion, 1400-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 495; Kevin Joseph Sheehan, "Iberian Asia: The Strategies of Spanish and Portuguese Empire Building, 1540-1700", PhD dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 2008, 24-72.

7 Sheehan, "Iberian Asia", 24-72.

8 Denis Cosgrove, *Apollo's Eye: A Cartographic Genealogy of the Earth in the Western Imagination* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 84-5.

9 Maria Fernanda Alegria, et al., "Portuguese Cartography in the Renaissance," in J.B. Harley and David Woodward (eds), *The History of Cartography, Vol. III, Bk. 1, Cartography in the European Renaissance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 996-7.

10 For an account of the efforts of the Portuguese crown to collect and standardise cartographic information, see David Turnbull, "Cartography and Science in Early Modern

ready existed at the end of the fifteenth century, systematically updated nautical charts so that they reflected the latest discoveries.<sup>11</sup> Portuguese rulers also continued to commission cartographers to draw world maps for them. In 1457, Dom Henrique's (Henry the Navigator's) nephew Afonso V commissioned the Italian cartographer Fra Mauro to draw a world map, which incorporated the details of Portuguese voyages along the west coast of Africa.<sup>12</sup> Portuguese geographic accounts, in particular cartographical production on the Indian Ocean and India, diminished in the second half of the sixteenth century. After 1580, increasing Dutch interest in the Indian Ocean, and the united Spanish and Portuguese crowns' need to maintain and control the coastal zone of India, spurred the production of military and urban cartography.<sup>13</sup> These maps incorporated knowledge from both eyewitness accounts and accounts written before the European discoveries.

Ottoman political and commercial interest in the Indian Ocean and India was not as systematic or centralised as in the case of the Portuguese. As soon as they reached the shores of the Indian Ocean in the early sixteenth century, the Ottomans established a clear yet cautious presence in the region. Ottoman ruling elites were well aware of the economic importance of the Indian Ocean, which played a significant role in the spice trade. Ottoman efforts to take control of the Red Sea and its trade network had already started during the reign of Selim I (r. 1512-20). Selim's eastern campaigns and, later, the conquest of Egypt and the Hijaz region brought the Ottomans to the shores of the Red Sea. With conquest came a sense of responsibility to protect Ottoman ships and domains in this area.

During the reign of Sultan Süleyman (r. 1520-66), the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean became arenas for different factions of the Ottoman court to compete with each other and display their political and military talents and skills.<sup>14</sup> The geographical distance of the Indian Ocean worked against its political and economic significance in the eyes of many at the Ottoman court, including Süleyman and his grand vizier İbrahim Pasha (d. 1536), whose main concern in this period was to gain full control of the Mediterranean. Nevertheless, the Ottomans aimed to thwart Portuguese efforts to expand in the region surrounding the Red Sea, which required solid control of the southern coast of the Arabian Peninsula. At the same time, they endeavoured to establish political and

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Europe: Mapping the Construction of Knowledge Spaces," *Imago Mundi* 48 (1996), 5-24.

11 Alegria, et al., "Portuguese Cartography," 1003-4.

12 Jeremy Brotton, *Trading Territories: Mapping the Early Modern World* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997), 50-1.

13 Alegria, et al., "Portuguese Cartography," 1019-22.

14 Casale, Ottoman Age of Exploration.

economic alliances with the Muslim communities in Gujarat. The Ottoman fleet, especially under the command of Hadım Süleyman Paşa, sometimes engaged in the region to challenge the Portuguese militarily. Ottoman economic ambitions in the region also targeted Portuguese merchant ships, but ideologically the Ottoman court also wanted to present a formidable challenge to the Safavid shahs' claims to be the rulers of Muslims the world over and to keep the Hijaz region safe. This political agenda was strongly challenged by the Ottoman geographers, who tried to transmit the latest knowledge about these regions to the Ottoman court and who, in doing so, aimed at formulating and reformulating the court's imperial ideology in the Indian Ocean.

Ottoman intellectuals, particularly geographers, had been fascinated with the Indian Ocean's geography since the early decades of the sixteenth century. The earliest extant geographical account that informs the Ottoman court of political developments in the Indian Ocean is the introduction of Piri Reis's *Kitab-ı Bahriye*. Piri Reis, a former pirate, joined forces with the Ottoman fleet during the reign of Bayezid II (r. 1481-1512) to assist Ottoman ships establish a formidable presence in the Aegean Sea and around the North African coast.<sup>15</sup> Around 1510, he withdrew to Gallipoli where he completed a world map and assembled the notes for his navigational guidebook.<sup>16</sup> He presented the world map to Selim I when the Ottoman sultan was in Cairo in 1517. Selim rewarded the intrepid seaman by assigning him to the imperial sea-captains' corps in Alexandria.<sup>17</sup> In 1524, Piri Reis led the Ottoman fleet to Egypt to carry out the grand vizier İbrahim Paşa's campaign to suppress Governor Ahmed Paşa's rebellion. During this venture, the grand vizier first saw Piri Reis's guidebook, which the captain had completed in 1521, and commissioned him to prepare an

15 Svat Soucek, "Piri Reis," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*<sup>2</sup> (Leiden: Brill, 1960-2005).

16 This paragraph is based on Adnan A. Adıvar, *Osmanlı Türklerinde İlim*, 5th edn (İstanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 1991), 74-8; A. Afetinan, *Life and Works of Piri Reis*, trans. Leman Yolaç and Engin Uzmen, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1987); Paul Kahle, "Piri Re'is: The Turkish Sailor and Cartographer," *Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society* 4 (1956), 99-108; Klaus Kreiser, "Piri Reis," in Ingrid Kretschmer, Johannes Dörlinger and Franz Wawrik (eds), *Lexicon zur Geschichte der Kartographie*, Vol. 2 (Vienna: Franz Deuticke, 1986), 607-9; Soucek, "Piri Reis"; idem, "Islamic Charting in the Mediterranean," in J.B. Hartley and D. Woodward (eds), *History of Cartography, Vol. 11, Book 1: Cartography in the Traditional Islamic and South Asian Societies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 267; idem, "Piri Reis," in Halil İnalcık and Cemal Kafdar (eds), *Süleyman the Second and His Time* (Istanbul: İSİS Press, 1993), 379-89; Franz Babinger, "Piri Muhyi'd-Din Re'is," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*<sup>1</sup> (Leiden: Brill, 1913-38); Fuad Ezgü, "Piri Reis," in *İslam Ansiklopedisi* (Istanbul: MEB, 1964), Vol. 9, 561-3.

17 Cf. Casale, *Ottoman Age of Exploration*, 214; and Cengiz Orhonlu, "Hint Kaptanlığı ve Piri Reis," *Bellekten* 34/134 (1967), 235-45.

expanded version of the work for Sultan Süleyman.<sup>18</sup> Piri Reis completed his revisions and presented the final product, *Kitab-ı Bahriye*, to Süleyman I in Istanbul in 1526.

The main focus of the *Kitab-ı Bahriye* is the Mediterranean. However, in the introduction Piri Reis offers a lengthy discussion on the voyages of Portuguese seamen in the Indian Ocean and, as mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, narrates how the Portuguese came to establish control in the region. In his account of the Indian Ocean, Piri Reis also displays his familiarity with navigational techniques and instruments used by the Portuguese, such as astrolabes, hourglasses, maps and the knowledge of calculating parallels. He explains,

This is how the navigation in the Indian Ocean works. Whoever is knowledgeable with it, takes a rod in his hands, holds it up to the north and brings it to the horizon between the sea and sky. For at night, the sea is dark but the sky is bright. When it is exactly on the horizon, they measure the lower part of the rod. Looking at it straight upwards they observe the North Star. If it is not visible, this is what they do. They put the rod down and take up another and by such reckoning they chart their course. Good friend, this then is the science of proportional navigation. It is the result of hundreds of trials on the routes to India. By their experience, they know where they are going and even if the sea is raging, they return. This method is used only in the Indian Ocean, for the North Star is clearly visible there. The North Star is always their target; with it they perform their tasks. Nevertheless in some places the North Star is not visible, but wise men have discovered a remedy for that too. Companion, they chart that course with the astrolabe by taking elevations.<sup>19</sup>

Similar detailed passages on the navigational techniques and the Portuguese activities dominates the Ottoman seaman's account on the Indian Ocean. Piri Reis's narrative epitomised the Ottoman court's attitude towards this vast ocean in the early sixteenth century. First, throughout his introduction to *Kitab-ı Bahriye*, the Ottoman seaman describes the region through the lens of Portuguese activities and accounts. From his descriptions, it becomes clear that Piri Reis consulted mainly the Portuguese accounts and not the indigenous mariners' or contemporary Muslim accounts of the Indian Ocean. There are no references to the works of Ibn Mājid (d. c. 1500), the most famous and

18 Piri Reis, *Kitab-ı Bahriye*, Süleymaniye Library, MS Ayasofya 2612, fol. 3a; Piri Reis, *Kitab-ı Bahriye*, ed. Ökte, et al., Vol. 1, 42-3.

19 Piri Reis, *Kitab-ı Bahriye*, fols 29b-30a; Piri Reis, *Kitab-ı Bahriye*, ed. Ökte, et al., Vol. 1, 150-1.



one of the last Indian Ocean navigators prior to the arrival of the Portuguese, or Sulaymān al-Mahrī (d. c. 1554), another famous Arab navigator.<sup>20</sup> Second, the recurrent theme of his narrative is the dangers of the Indian Ocean. Piri Reis cautions his readers about the difficulties in navigating this “infinite” (*bigiran*) ocean and almost goes so far as to advise Ottoman seamen to stay out of the region, if possible. Piri Reis does not hide his admiration for the Portuguese, who managed to sail through the strong storms and heavy rains that rendered navigating the Indian Ocean dangerous.<sup>21</sup> Finally, no maps or charts of the region accompany Piri Reis’s narrative on the Indian Ocean basin. We know from his world map that Piri Reis had access to the Portuguese charts of the region, but it appears that the sea captain did not deem it important to include any maps of the Indian Ocean or India in the *Kitab-ı Bahriye*.<sup>22</sup>

In the sixteenth century, the Ottoman court was well aware of the economic importance of the Indian Ocean. However, by the time of Selim I’s eastern campaigns and, later, the conquest of Egypt and the Hijaz region in 1516 and 1517, the Portuguese navy had already reached the west coast of India and threatened the merchant ships sailing between the Red Sea and Malabar in western India. When Süleyman ascended the Ottoman throne in 1520, the Portuguese were well on their way to establishing firm control over the major trade routes and ports in the Indian Ocean. In the 1530s and 40s, the Ottoman court made several attempts to establish a powerful presence along the southern coast of the Arabian Peninsula. Around the same time, it also sought political alliance with Gujarati Muslims and in 1531 helped Gujarat to defend Diu against the Portuguese. However, this alliance was short-lived. The feeble ventures of the Ottoman navy in the Indian Ocean during the following two decades further marginalised the region in the Ottoman imperial imagination. Piri Reis’s narrative was an early indication of the fact that the Ottoman court had already acknowledged that they had lost the region to the Portuguese.

Perhaps it is not a coincidence that Piri Reis’s only failure as a sea captain took place in the Indian Ocean. The prestigious captain – admiral of the Indian fleet and geographer, whom the Ottoman court admired and respected on account of his geographical works and service in the Mediterranean – failed to capture Hormuz in 1552. Feeling very unconfident in these not-so-friendly waters, the admiral abandoned his fleet in Basra and fled to Suez. Piri Reis paid for this disgraceful deed with his life; he was executed by Ottoman officials.

20 On the empirical methods used by these navigators to determine latitudes, see Alfred Clark, “Medieval Arab Navigation on the Indian Ocean: Latitude Determinations,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 113/3 (1993), 360–73.

21 Piri Reis, *Kitab-ı Bahriye*, fols 22a–24b; Piri Reis, *Kitab-ı Bahriye*, ed. Ökte et al., Vol. 1, 118–29.

22 Piri Reis, *Mappamundi*, Topkapı Saray Müzesi, MS Revan Köşkü 1633 mük.

Grand Vizier Rüstem Pasha charged Seydi Ali Reis with taking the abandoned armada from Basra back to Suez. Seydi Ali came from a well-established family of Black Sea seamen. He served in the Ottoman navy during the conquest of Rhodes and joined Hayreddin Barbarossa in other Mediterranean campaigns. Under the patronage of the grand vizier Rüstem Pasha, the sea captain also became an active participant in Constantinople's intellectual and political life. Despite having spent most of his career in the Mediterranean, Seydi Ali's reputation as a successful seaman and a prominent geographer stems from his service in the Indian Ocean.<sup>23</sup> In 1553, Sultan Süleyman appointed him admiral of the Red Sea fleet. His first mission in this post was to take to Egypt the Ottoman naval ships that Piri Reis had abandoned in Basra. After being ambushed by the Portuguese off the coast of Muscat, the majority of Seydi Ali's ships either sank or were captured by the Portuguese. He was unable to take the remaining ships back to Suez and instead anchored them in the port of Surat in Gujarat.

Seydi Ali's mission in the Indian Ocean yielded two important geographic works on the Indian Ocean and India. It was while he was in Gujarat in 1554 that he wrote his *Kitab-ı Muhit* (Book of the Ocean), a sailor's guide for the Indian Ocean. For decades, scholars treated the *Kitab-ı Muhit* either as a simple translation of several Arabic navigation manuals or as a complementary work to Piri Reis's *Kitab-ı Bahriye*. Only recently has Giancarlo Casale reevaluated the work and presented it as important evidence of the Ottomans' imperial interest in the Indian Ocean.<sup>24</sup>

Although his experiences clearly informed his account, Seydi Ali also benefited from accounts on the Indian Ocean by Ibn Mājid and Sulaymān al-Mahri. His work opens with a dedication to Süleyman I in which Seydi Ali refers to the Ottoman sultan as the "ruler of the seven climes" and the *afitab-ı 'alem-tab* (sun illuminating the universe).<sup>25</sup> Seydi Ali Reis then promptly explains the title of his book and expresses his hopes for the reception of this navigation manual:

This book is called *Muhit*<sup>26</sup> because it covers all the oddities of the science of navigation in the seas. I hope that those knowledgeable people

23 Svat Soucek, "Sidi Ali Reis," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*<sup>2</sup> (Leiden: Brill, 1960-2005); Cengiz Orhonlu, "Seydi Ali Reis," *Tarih Enstitüsü Dergisi* 1 (1970), 39-56; Casale, *Ottoman Age of Exploration*, 85-9.

24 Casale, *Ottoman Age of Exploration*, 186-7.

25 Seydi Ali Reis, *Kitab-ı Muhit*, Süleymaniye Library, MS Nuruosmaniye 2948, fol. 2a.

26 In Ottoman Turkish, *muhit* translates as "ocean". In Arabic, *muhit* is the active participle of the verbal noun *ihata*, meaning "that which surrounds".

who read it can correct the mistakes with the pen of forgiveness. I also hope that those who benefit from the book in sailing remember its author and pray for him.<sup>27</sup>

At first glance, the *Kitab-ı Muhit* appears to be a standard, and at times tedious, navigation manual full of technical details that might bore a reader outside the sailing profession. It does not contain any maps.<sup>28</sup> The value of the work, however, stems from its comprehensive treatment of the topography and climate of the Indian Ocean. In ten chapters, Seydi Ali deals with a variety of topics, such as the history of Portuguese discoveries in the region; the names and positions of the stars and the division of the firmament; common curses used by the mariners of India, Arabia and Sri Lanka; the islands and atolls in the Indian Ocean; and the strong winds and storms of the region.<sup>29</sup> Seydi Ali's thorough treatment of the islands, atolls and ports around the Indian Ocean, his warnings about the possible dangers awaiting seamen in the region and his tips on how to avoid and survive these calamities are clear indications of his experience and his knowledge of geographical literature on the Indian Ocean.<sup>30</sup> In this respect, Seydi Ali Reis follows in the footsteps of Piri Reis. Like his predecessor, he also incorporates his own experiences in the region into his account and tries to transmit the latest knowledge about the region to his readers. Therefore, *Kitab-ı Muhit* is more than a sailor's manual. In it, Seydi Ali refers to current events and relates the history of Portuguese discoveries in the Indian Ocean. In the fifth chapter, he describes how Portuguese discoveries started in the sixteenth century, which routes early Portuguese explorers used and which islands they discovered first. Here, he states that he heard some of the details of the discoveries from a Portuguese seaman who entered the service of Süleyman during the grand vizierate of İbrahim Pasha.<sup>31</sup>

Seydi Ali Reis, like Piri Reis, wrote the *Kitab-ı Muhit* in hopes of enhancing the geographical knowledge of the Ottoman court and at the same time shaping its political agenda. He wrote under the patronage of Grand Vizier Rüstem Pasha, whose political and economic policies were much more conservative than those of his predecessor İbrahim Pasha. Rüstem Pasha, from the outset, was more concerned with consolidating Ottoman authority over the areas that the empire was already in control of than adding new lands to the imperial domains. The *Kitab-ı Muhit* articulated the grand vizier's political agenda and

27 Seydi Ali Reis, *Kitab-ı Muhit*, Süleymaniye Library, Nuruosmaniye 2948, fol. 2b.

28 This might account for the scant amount of manuscript copies produced.

29 Seydi Ali Reis, *Kitab-ı Muhit*, Süleymaniye Library, Nuruosmaniye 2948, fols 4a-9b, 14a-15b.

30 Ibid., fols 15b-16a, 31b-32b.

31 Ibid., fols 28a-29a.

firmly relegated the Indian Ocean to the margins of the Ottomans' imperial vision.

The main theme of Seydi Ali's *Kitab-ı Muhit* is the calamities that one might experience in the region. On several occasions, he reinforces this point by comparing the geographical size, climate, navigational techniques and methods required when sailing in the Indian Ocean with the size, climate and techniques needed in the Mediterranean. In a passage in which he describes how a compass works, he discusses the different compasses used in France, Portugal and the Ottoman empire. Here, Seydi Ali maintains that a broken compass is not likely to cause too many problems for seamen in the Black Sea or the Mediterranean, where the distances are much shorter than in the Indian Ocean.<sup>32</sup> In making these comparisons, he clearly wants to draw the court's attention to his professional knowledge about the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean. But in doing so, he presents a rather gloomy picture of the former in comparison to the latter.

Although modern historical literature considers it an example of the Ottomans' imperial interest in the Indian Ocean, *Kitab-ı Muhit* did not find a large audience in the sixteenth century. Among the four extant manuscript copies of the work, two date from that century. That only two copies of the *Kitab-ı Muhit* were produced in the sixteenth century while Piri Reis's *Kitab-ı Bahriye* appeared in more than two dozen copies at that time suggests that geographical works on the Indian Ocean were not really of interest to the Ottoman court at that time. Unlike the Mediterranean, where vital political and commercial interests were at stake, the Indian Ocean was of secondary importance for the majority of the members of the Ottoman court and their understanding of universal sovereignty. In the context of a "major concern for stability" in the second half of the sixteenth century,<sup>33</sup> Ottoman ruling-elite members such as Rüstem Pasha chose to leave the Indian Ocean aside and consolidate the energies of the empire into strengthening Ottoman sovereignty in the already-conquered territories.

*Kitab-ı Muhit* is, however, invaluable as an example of the Ottoman court's openness to knowledge of the geography and history of the Indian Ocean. Seydi Ali further delves into the geography and history of this region in his second book, *Mir'atü'l-Memalik* (Mirror of Lands). In 1557, the admiral composed an account of his travels from the port of Surat to Istanbul for his prestigious

32 Ibid., fols 16a-17a.

33 Baki Tezcan, "The 'Frank' in the Ottoman Eye of 1583," in James Harper (ed.), *The Turk and Islam in the Western Eye (1453-1750): Visual Imagery before Orientalism* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2011), 268-96.

patron, Rüstem Pasha.<sup>34</sup> Like *Kitab-ı Muhit*, the *Mir'atü'l-Memalik* found its way into the palace library. There are five extant copies of the work, only two of which are from the sixteenth century.

*Mir'atü'l-Memalik* opens with an eloquent explanation of why the author composed this work. Seydi Ali states that he prepared this account for posterity with the hope that it would one day appreciate the hardships that he had endured on his journey. He describes how he was appointed admiral and given imperial orders to take the Ottoman naval ships abandoned in Basra to Egypt. He provides a detailed description of the difficulties that he and his crew faced at the hands of the Portuguese around the gulf of Basra and the southern tip of the Arabian peninsula. He also writes of the harsh and volatile weather conditions in the region. He tells of how he and his crew eventually navigated westwards across the Indian Ocean until they finally anchored in the port of Surat three months after starting their journey in Basra.<sup>35</sup> In the following section, Seydi Ali describes the geography of the Gujarat region, and places special emphasis on local rulers and on local Muslim shrines and communities. More than once he mentions the various Portuguese activities in the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. But, as its title suggests, *Mir'atü'l-Memalik* is about many lands, all of which were on the periphery of the Ottoman empire. While India and the Indian Ocean receive the bulk of his attention, Seydi Ali also provides descriptions of Transoxiana, Khurasan, Persia and Iraq.

Textually speaking, *Mir'atü'l-Memalik* breaks from contemporary portrayals of Indian ports and cities. Whereas contemporary Portuguese accounts describe India as a land of endless riches and trade opportunities,<sup>36</sup> *Mir'atü'l-Memalik* projects India through the lens of Seydi Ali's patron Rüstem Pasha's political agenda. Here, he uses India as a screen on which the new universal rulers, the Ottoman sultans, could project their imperial power and confirm their religious authority. Seydi Ali frequently refers to the loyalty of Muslim communities in Gujarat to the Ottoman sultan, and to their desire to be part of the Ottoman empire:

34 Casale, *Ottoman Age of Exploration*, 120-3.

35 Seydi Ali Reis, *Mir'atü'l-Memalik*, Topkapı Saray Müzesi, MS Revan Köşkü 1470, fols 2b-18b.

36 For an example of sixteenth-century Portuguese descriptions of the riches of the west coast of India, see Tomé Pires, *The Suma Oriental of Tome Pires: An Account of the East, from the Red Sea to China written in Malacca and India in 1512-15 and The Book of Francisco Rodrigues: Pilot-Major of the Armada that Discovered Banda and the Moluccas*, trans. and ed. Armando Cortesão (New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 1990), Vol. 1, 52-84. For Tomé Pires's description of the Indian Archipelago's riches, see Pires, *The Suma Oriental*, Vol. 1, 135-223.

Since the time of Adam, no corsairs, in other words no captain who is knowledgeable about the science of navigation, reached these parts of India from the Ottoman lands [*diyar-i Rum*]. So God willing, one wishes that in the near future, Gujarat will be annexed to the Ottoman Empire [*Memalik-i Osmaniyye*]. Thus, these ports of India will be saved from the hands of the despicable infidels.<sup>37</sup>

Seydi Ali, perhaps in an effort to encourage the sultan's military engagement in the region, articulates the wishes of the local Muslims for the Ottomans to annex these lands. Although this passage can be considered a plea to the sultan and to the grand vizier to take a more aggressive stance in India and the Indian Ocean to protect the Muslim communities, in the end, both seemed to take a more peaceful approach.<sup>38</sup> This is the only passage in the whole work where the author courageously tries to convince the Ottoman court to take action. Elsewhere the main emphasis is on the loyalty of the Muslim communities to the Ottoman sultan. For instance, in one passage, Seydi Ali narrates a conversation between the sultan of Gujarat's grand vizier and the Portuguese ambassador in which the latter demands the return of Seydi Ali and his crew to the Portuguese. The admiral claims that the grand vizier refused this request with the following words: "We need the Ottoman sultan [*Padişah-i Rum*]. Had our ships not reached their trading ports, we would be ruined [our position would be altered]. Above all, he is the Sultan of Islam. Is it reasonable to demand his naval captain from us?"<sup>39</sup>

Such expressions of devotion and respect for the Ottoman sultan by Gujarati rulers and natives did not reflect reality. Ottoman–Gujarati relations had followed an uneven path since their first interactions in the early sixteenth century. Neither party trusted the other, and economic alliances with the Portuguese were not uncommon in Gujarati and Ottoman courts. Why, then, did Seydi Ali insist on portraying Muslim communities in India as loyal to the Ottoman sultan? His mission in the Indian Ocean coincided with the second half of Sultan Süleyman's reign, when a distinct Ottoman imperial culture emerged in Constantinople.<sup>40</sup> During the first two decades of his reign, Sultan Süleyman's

37 Seydi Ali Reis, *Mir'atü'l-Memalik*, Topkapı Saray Müzesi, MS Revan Köşkü 1470, fol. 19b.

38 On the *Mirror of Lands's* importance for Ottoman aspirations in the Indian Ocean, and its articulation of Rüstem Pasha's Ottoman-centric world view, see Casale, *Ottoman Age of Exploration*, 84–7.

39 Seydi Ali Reis, *Mir'atü'l-Memalik*, Topkapı Saray Müzesi, MS Revan Köşkü 1470, fol. 23b.

40 Gülru Necipoğlu, "Süleyman the Magnificent and the Representation of Power in the Context of Ottoman-Hapsburg-Papal Rivalry," *Art Bulletin* 71/3 (1989), 401–27; idem, "A Kanun for the State, a Canon for the Arts," in Giles Veinstein (ed.), *Soliman le Magnifique*

direct orders, military campaigns and edicts determined the Ottoman state's affairs. By contrast, during the second half of his reign, the dissemination of dynastic law and the dispensation of justice became the symbols of the Ottoman sultan's impersonal authority.<sup>41</sup> This newly injected Sunni piety came in direct response to the Ottomans' rivalry with the Shi'ite Safavids, and was meant to reinforce the dynastic legitimacy and spiritual authority of the Ottoman house.<sup>42</sup>

Seydi Ali, who acted as an official ambassador on behalf of the Ottoman court to the Gujarati sultan and was the protégé of the Ottoman grand vizier,<sup>43</sup> contributed to this enterprise by emphasising the Gujarati Muslims' respect for the Ottoman sultan and the warm welcome that he and his crew received from Gujarati elites. Seydi Ali strengthens this point in several anecdotes about his conversations with Gujarati elites on his way from Surat to Constantinople. In these passages, Seydi Ali Reis insists that the Ottoman empire and its capital city are unrivalled in splendour and beauty. During a conversation with the Gujarati ruler, Seydi Ali even compares the Ottoman lands with India and affirms that the size of the Ottoman empire equals that of Alexander the Great's. Both, he says, have possessions in the seven climes of the world.<sup>44</sup> Seydi Ali's message here is clear; the Ottoman sultan's claims to universal sovereignty were well received and accepted, even in India.

With the Ottoman court's attention fixed, for the most part, on the Mediterranean, both *Kitab-ı Muhit* and *Mir'atü'l-Memalik* went almost unread in the sixteenth century. The *portolan* atlases produced in Europe for the Ottoman market also reflect and confirm this comparatively limited interest in the region. For example, the *Walters Sea Atlas* (1560), which charts the Mediterranean in seven different *portolans*, features only a single map of the Indian Ocean (see Figure 11.1).<sup>45</sup> The other *portolan* atlases prepared for the Ottoman

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*et son Temps* (Paris: La Documentation Française, 1992), 195-216; Cornell Fleischer, "The Lawgiver as Messiah: The Making of the Imperial Image in the Reign of Süleyman," in Weinstein, *Soliman le Magnifique*, 159-77.

41 Fleischer, "Lawgiver as Messiah," 166; Cornell Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire: The Historian Mustafa Ali (1541-1600)* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), 191-252.

42 Fleischer, "Lawgiver as Messiah," 161.

43 Suraiya Faroqhi argues that Seydi Ali Reis wished to present himself as an ambassador. He fulfilled some of the duties of an ambassador and took back useful information to Constantinople. Suraiya Faroqhi, *The Ottoman Empire and the World Around It* (New York, NY: I.B.Tauris, 2004), 184.

44 Seydi Ali Reis, *Mir'atü'l-Memalik*, Topkapı Saray Müzesi, MS Revan Köşkü 1470, fols 39b-41a.

45 The map outlines recent European discoveries in the area. Thomas Goodrich, "The Earliest Ottoman Maritime Atlas: The Walters Deniz Atlası," published in *Archivum Ottomanicum* 11 (1986), 25-50.

court during this period either completely omit the region, as in the case of Ali Macar Reis's atlas (1567), or depict only the Arabian Sea, as in the case of the *Imperial Atlas* (c. 1570).<sup>46</sup> From the early decades of the sixteenth century, the Ottomans had been aware of the Indian Ocean and its role in global trade and politics. However, Ottoman political and intellectual interest in the Indian Ocean remained subdued. The Ottoman court in the end acknowledged the limits of its military power in this area. While a full-scale military campaign to secure the region was never feasible, the Ottoman sultan's image as the guardian of Islam provided Ottoman geographers with the knowledge needed to fold India into the empire, even if it was only to remain on the periphery.

Nevertheless, the Ottoman court's marginal but enduring intellectual and political interest in the Indian Ocean continued well into the seventeenth century. Military crises were endemic between 1650 and 1703. Costly victories, and even more costly defeats, lost the empire a great deal of territory and prestige. The failure at the siege of Vienna (1683) began a period of reversals ending with the treaty of Karlowitz (1699). The Ottoman geographers witnessed the military failures first-hand, and their accounts reflected the changes in the world and their empire's geography. As borders and border commissions became a norm in international relations, Ottoman geographers adapted to these changes and took it upon themselves to educate their imperial elites and public about the borders of their empire, which were constantly in motion.

One of these geographers was Katib Çelebi, who prepared the Ottoman-Turkish translation of Jodocus Hondius's redaction of Gerardus Mercator's *Atlas Minor* between 1653 and 1655. A leading figure, who provided the Ottoman court with translations as well as original works, Katib Çelebi was a historian, biographer and geographer. After receiving a traditional madrasa education, he joined the Ottoman chancery as an apprentice in 1622. In 1635 he gave up his career as a scribe to pursue an eclectic range of studies: religious sciences, law, mathematics, astronomy and geography – and, in particular, maps. Katib Çelebi was one of the most prolific Ottoman authors. He left around eighteen works on variety of topics such as encyclopaedic projects, translations, occasional treatises and didactic or entertaining compilations. He quickly became a member of Constantinople's intellectual circles.

Katib Çelebi prepared his translation of Mercator's atlas between 1653 and 1655 with the help of Mehmed İhlas, a former French priest and a convert to

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46 Ali Macar Reis, *Atlas*, Topkapı Saray Müzesi, MS Hazine 644; idem, *Atlas-ı Hümayun* (*Imperial Atlas*), Istanbul Archeology Museum MS 1621.



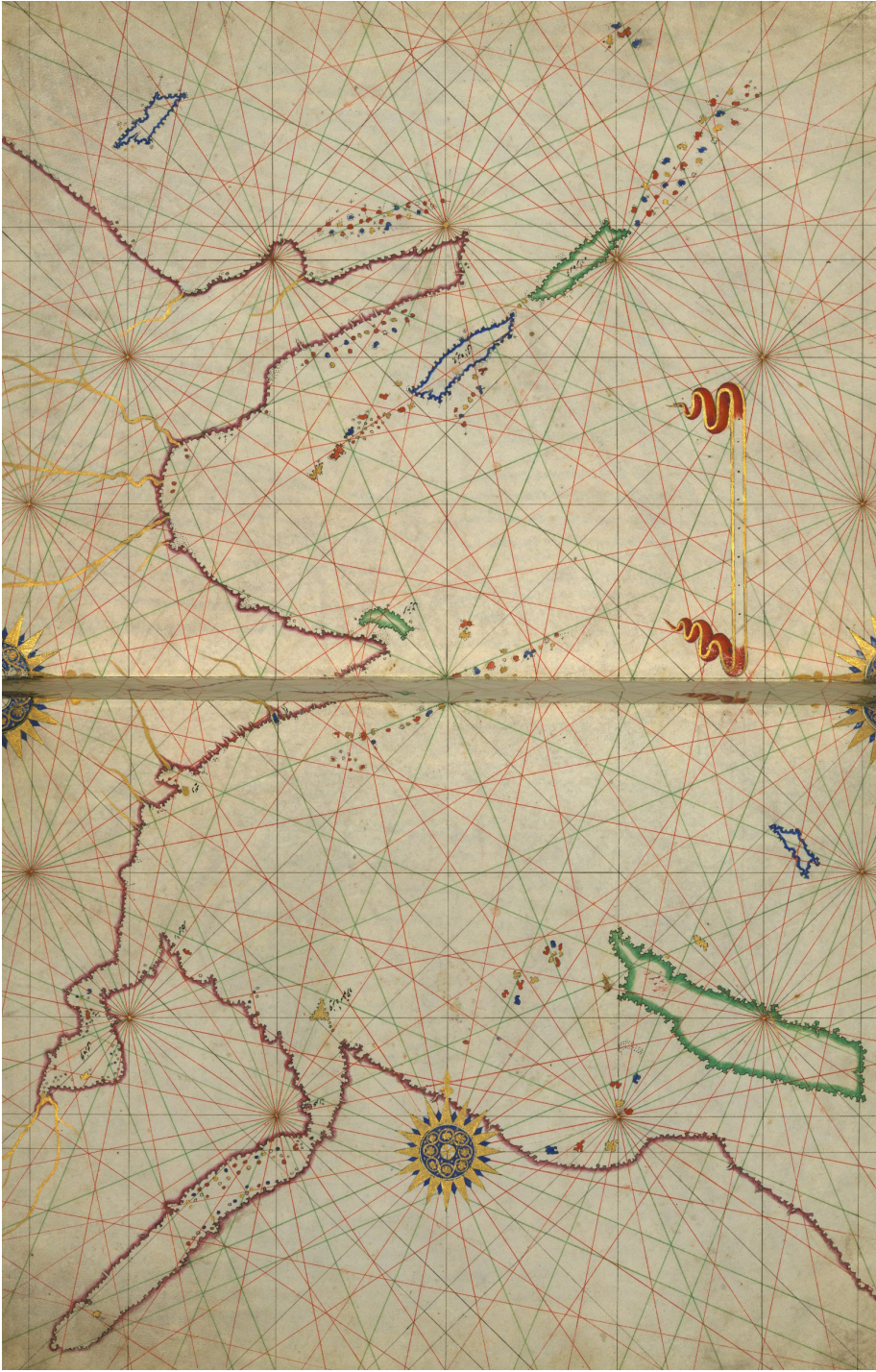


FIGURE 11.1 Map of the Indian Ocean. Walters Sea Atlas (c. 1560), Walters Art Museum, W. 66o, 7b-8a

Islam.<sup>47</sup> Katip Çelebi's translation is 429 folios long and it includes 148 maps.<sup>48</sup> Jodocus Hondius (d. 1621) acquired the copper plates of Mercator's atlas in 1604. He augmented the atlas with maps of Spain and the four continents, and published an amended version in cooperation with Cornelis Claesz in 1606. In 1609 Hondius published the first French-language edition. Jodocus Hondius, and later his sons Jodocus Jr. and Henricus, increased the number of maps from 144 in the Latin 1606 edition of the atlas to 164 in the 1630 edition.<sup>49</sup> Katib Çelebi possibly used a French edition of the atlas published after 1609. All the maps in the Ottoman Turkish translation were hand-drawn by him even though he had not received any formal training in cartography. In his translation, Katib Çelebi follows the tradition that Hondius started, and uses the Latin titles for his maps. Here, his translation differs from others in one area: the Latin titles are written in the Arabic alphabet in Katib Çelebi's translation.

This work provides a more comprehensive and detailed presentation of the world for its Ottoman audiences than did the atlases of the previous century. There are fourteen copies of this work now extant, five of which are from the eighteenth and nine from the nineteenth century.<sup>50</sup> Katib Çelebi's translation opens with a world map followed by generic maps of each continent – Europe, Asia, Africa and the New World – and then moves onto the more detailed charts of major political and administrative entities within these four continents. While most of these maps, including those of the British Isles and Spain, are left empty, others like Anatolia, Austria, Poland, Hungary, Italy and India are very detailed, with place names and topographical indicators. Katip Çelebi's map of India (see Figure 11.2), which is a copy of Mercator's, was a great improvement for the Ottoman geographical tradition on India with regard to its accuracy and detail.<sup>51</sup> On Katip Çelebi's map, mountainous ranges to the

47 Faroqhi, *The Ottoman Empire*, 199–200; Ahmet Karamustafa, "Military, Administrative, and Scholarly Maps and Plans," in J.B. Harley and David Woodward (eds), *The History of Cartography*, Vol. 2, Bk. 1, *Cartography in the Traditional Islamic and South Asian Societies* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 218. Katip Çelebi also compiled and translated numerous works on the history and geography of the Ottoman empire, Europe and the universe. On Katip Çelebi and his works, see Gottfried Hagen, *Ein osmanischer Geograph bei der Arbeit: Entstehung und Gedankenwelt von Katib Çelebis Cihannüma* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 2003).

48 There were 152 maps embedded in the 1621 issue of the atlas.

49 Peter van der Krogt, "Amsterdam Atlas Production in the 1630s: A Bibliographer's Nightmare," *Imago Mundi* 48 (1996), 151.

50 Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, *Osmanlı Coğrafya Literatürü Tarihi* (Istanbul: IRCICA, 2000), Vol. 1, 90–2.

51 Katip Çelebi, *Atlas Minor*, Süleymaniye Library, MS Nuruosmaniye 2998, fol. 401a; Gerard Mercator and Jan Hondius *Atlas Minor* (Amsterdam, 1609).

north and south as well as the rivers are clearly marked along with some of the port cities such as Goa, Calicut and Bacanor. We can also see the labels for some of the administrative and political divisions in India: India Intra Gangem, India Extra Gangem, Gujarat, Pala, Delli (Delhi) and Bisnagar (Visnagar). The label reads *India Orientalis Ya'ni Hindistan*. All labels on the map are in Latin and the map is north oriented.

Katib Çelebi's map of India is an important marker in the history of Ottoman cartographical knowledge. It is among the first attempts by an Ottoman intellectual to copy directly from a contemporary European atlas and, therefore, represents a great example of the extent of networks of cartographical-knowledge exchange that reached to the Ottoman empire in the seventeenth century. Sonja Brentjes argues that western European scholars frequently visited the Ottoman empire in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. She maintains that the Ottoman and western European scholars interacted in three distinctive ways in this period. First, western scholars visited the Ottoman empire to collect cartographical and geographical material. Second, there were scholarly communities in the Ottoman empire engaged in a variety of scientific endeavours. Third, Ottoman scholars and officials, including religious elites, allowed and sought encounters and debates and thus exchanged knowledge with western European travellers.<sup>52</sup> Katib Çelebi, who was a prominent member of intellectual circles in the Ottoman empire, was also among Ottoman scholars who sought contemporary knowledge from Europe which he adapted into his own work.

Katib Çelebi started translating Mercator's atlas while he was researching ways to improve his first encyclopaedic work on world geography, *Cihannüma*. The first version of *Cihannüma* largely followed the structure of Islamic cosmography. The work divided the world into spheres, climes and elements. In this version, Katib Çelebi initially intended to include recent information on Europe and the New World. He later explained that he had abandoned the enterprise because he was unsatisfied with the available sources. After he acquired Hondius's edition of Mercator's atlas, Katip Çelebi started working on the second version of the *Cihannüma*. This time his sources included *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* by Ortelius and *Introductio in totam geographiam* by Philippus Cluverius. Also at his disposal were works of various geographers

52 Sonja Brentjes, "On the Relations between the Ottoman Empire and the West European Republic of Letters (17th -18th Centuries)," in eadem, *Travellers from Europe in the Ottoman and Safavid Empires, 16th-17th Centuries: Seeking, Transforming, Discarding Knowledge* (Farnham: Ashgate Variorum Reprints, 2010), Section II, 122-3.



FIGURE 11.2 Map of India. Katip Çelebi, *Atlas Minor*. Süleymaniye Library, MS Nuruosmaniye 2998, 401a

and historians from the Ottoman world and beyond, such as Abū'l-Fidā (d.1331), Aşık Mehmed (d.1613), Piri Reis (d. 1553), Hoca Sa'deddin (d. 1599), Hamdallāh Mustawfī (d. 1344) and Amīn Aḥmad Rāzī (sixteenth to seventeenth century).<sup>53</sup>

Katib Çelebi's *Cihannüma* epitomises how Ottoman scholars reformulated, catalogued and circulated contemporary notions regarding the usefulness of geographical knowledge and the science of geography in the seventeenth century. In the introduction to the second version of *Cihannüma*, Katip Çelebi argues that the study of geography provides not only a better understanding of the world but also a strategic and political advantage during military conflicts:

Geography is one of the sciences that are quite beneficial and useful in the civil and social lives of men, and mastering this science is more important than all things else for ministers and senior officials ... in case of any dispute on the borders of states this science would help resolve a difficulty.<sup>54</sup>

Katib Çelebi's compelling argument in favour of geographical knowledge here differs from how sixteenth-century Ottoman intellectuals understood geography. For instance, while most of the geographical works in the sixteenth century were called *history* (*tarih*) and gave no clear definition of geography, Katib Çelebi offers a more organised, rational and explicit definition of the science of geography for his readers and emphasise the usefulness of this science in resolving political and military conflicts, in particular the border conflicts which became urgent after the treaty of Karlowitz in 1699.

The second version of *Cihannüma* remained unfinished. Still, in addition to the ten manuscript copies from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and twenty-three from the nineteenth century, *Cihannüma* was also among the works published by İbrahim Müteferrika, who opened the first Arabic-script printing press in 1722. In 1732, the Müteferrika press published *Cihannüma*, supplementing it with Müteferrika's printer's addendum. Müteferrika had a wide range of contemporaneous works available to him when he prepared his addendum, including the autograph copy of the second version of *Cihannüma*;

53 On *Cihannüma* and its textual analysis, see Franz Taeschner, "Zur Geschichte des Djihan-  
numa," *Mitteilungen des Seminars für Orientalische Sprachen* 2/29 (1926), 99-110; Hagen,  
*Ein osmanischer Geograph*. For a detailed bibliography on Katib Çelebi and his works, see  
also Gottfried Hagen, "Historians of the Ottoman Empire: Katib Çelebi," originally pub-  
lished on ottomanhistorians.com, 2007, last accessed via <[https://www.academia.edu/  
3488778/Historians\\_of\\_the\\_Ottoman\\_Empire\\_Katib\\_Celebi#](https://www.academia.edu/3488778/Historians_of_the_Ottoman_Empire_Katib_Celebi#)>.

54 Katib Çelebi, *Kitab Cihannüma* (Qustantiniyya: Dar al-Ṭaba'a al-Amire, 1145 [1732]); idem,  
*Kitab Cihannüma*, Süleymaniye Library, Ms Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa 736, 16b-17a.

a copy of a Latin *Atlas Minor*, printed in Anneheim in 1621; and, possibly, Dimaşki's translation of Joan Blaeu's *Atlas Maior*.<sup>55</sup> Müteferrika's edition of *Cihannüma* enjoyed a moderate commercial success. By 1745, when he died and his printing house was abolished, of the 500 copies of *Cihannüma* printed, 251 had been sold.<sup>56</sup>

India and the Indian Ocean basin appear twice in *Cihannüma*, once as part of Asia and once as part of Southeast Asia.<sup>57</sup> None of these large-scale maps is complete. We can see some topographical markers on the second one, including the rivers and mountains. However, there are no labels for major towns, port cities or regions. Müteferrika's *Cihannüma* tries to remedy this gap, and – after a two-page projection of the world, maps of the Mediterranean basin and a map of Africa – it presents a large-scale map of the Indian Ocean basin on which the lands of Persia, India and the island of Ceylon are labelled (see Figure 11.3).<sup>58</sup> This edition also includes a two-page rendition of Southeast Asia – including modern-day Thailand, Singapore and Indonesia – and separate maps of the islands of Melaka and Sumatra.<sup>59</sup> Since Katib Çelebi's *Cihannüma* does not include these maps, questions about the origin and inspiration for them remain unanswered. As noted above, Müteferrika had a number of sources available to him. Among these sources, Dimaşki's translation of Blaeu's *Atlas Minor* and its eighteenth-century copies deserves further attention.

Ebu Bekir ibn Behram el-Dimaşki (d. 1691) also owned the autograph copy of the first version of *Cihannüma*. In 1668, the Dutch envoy in Istanbul, Justinus Colier, presented a copy of the Latin edition of Blaeu's *Atlas Maior* (1662) as a gift to the Ottoman sultan. As far as we know, in 1675, the grand vizier commissioned Dimaşki to supervise the translation of this voluminous work, which in the original contained 600 maps. The geographer completed the translation, titled the *Nusretü'l-İslam ve's-Surur fi Takrir-i Atlas Mayur* (The Triumph of Islam and Joy in the Writing of Atlas Maior), in 1685. This nine-volume

55 Emily Zoss, "An Ottoman View of the World: The *Kitab Cihannüma* and its Cartographic Contexts," in Christiane J. Gruber (ed.), *The Islamic Manuscript Tradition: Ten Centuries of Book Arts in Indiana University Collections* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2010), 208-9.

56 Orlin Sabev, "The First Ottoman Turkish Printing Enterprise: Success or Failure (A Reassessment)," in Dana Sajdi (ed.), *Ottoman Tulips, Ottoman Coffee: Leisure and Lifestytle in the Eighteenth Century* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2007), 71.

57 Katip Çelebi, *Cihannüma*, Topkapı Saray Müzesi, MS Revan 1624, fols 35a, 75a.

58 Katib Çelebi, *Kitab Cihannüma* (Qustantiniyya: Dar al-Ṭaba'a al-Amire, 1145 [1732]); idem, *Kitab Cihannüma*, Süleymaniye Library, MS Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa 736, fol. 96a.

59 Katib Çelebi, *Kitab Cihannüma* (Qustantiniyya: Dar al-Ṭaba'a al-Amire, 1145 [1732]); idem, *Kitab Cihannüma*, Süleymaniye Library, MS Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa 736, fols 118a-118b, 120a, 125a.



translation, an abridged version containing only 243 maps, was a collective enterprise of a team of translators and cartographers.

Ten manuscript copies of this work are housed in different libraries in Istanbul. One of them is an eighteenth-century abridged version which includes 110 maps in a single volume.<sup>60</sup> This copy illustrates the state of eighteenth-century Ottoman cartographical knowledge and the intimate connection between *Cihannüma*, its eighteenth-century Müteferrika edition and Dimaşki's translation. The text and the maps of this eighteenth-century manuscript are not merely copies of Dimaşki's translation but are the products of an effort to collect, reorder, catalogue and present the available cartographic knowledge about the Earth to its readers.

Dimaşki's translation opens with an introduction in which the geographer merges parts of Blaeu's text with passages from Arabic, Persian and Ottoman Turkish treatises on geography and planetary theory or astronomy. In this section, Dimaşki emphasises the importance of geographical knowledge and maintains that the Europeans had gained superiority over the Muslims thanks to the science of geography. Here, Dimaşki also refutes the notion that Muslim scholars did not contribute to the science of astronomy after medieval geographers such as 'Alī Qushjī (d. 1474) and Naşīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī (d. 1274). He argues that there are still many scholars in the Muslim world who are interested in astronomy. However, he laments that they are more interested in theoretical astronomy than the practical aspect of it. In this section, Dimaşki makes a clear distinction between astronomy, which deals with the universe, and geography, which deals with the Earth. He further states that those scholars who are familiar with one of the two are also conversant with the other.

After the introduction, Dimaşki describes the geography of the Earth and its seas and lakes, mountains, rivers, countries and regions. The order of the work here bears resemblance to the first version of *Cihannüma*. In terms of content, the text is a combination of Blaeu's with the Arabic, Persian and Ottoman Turkish texts. This overall restructuring is also reflected in the maps in the manuscript. The order of the maps in this abridged version deviates from that of *Atlas Maior*. In *Atlas Maior* and its translation by Dimaşki, the maps of the north and south poles are followed by those of Europe, Africa, Asia and the Americas. In the abridged version, the order is Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas. It is not clear who drew the maps of this eighteenth-century copy;

60 Ebu Bekir ibn Behram ed-Dimaşki, *Nusretü'l-İslam ve's-Surur fi Takrir-i Atlas Mayur*, Süleymaniye Library, MS Nuruosmaniye 2996.



however, they both appear to be the product of the same hand or workshop, and the inscriptions on the maps are from the same hand as well.<sup>61</sup>

A closer look at the maps of the eighteenth-century manuscript reveals that the order of the maps reflects Arabic, Persian and Ottoman Turkish geographical traditions – in particular, those displayed in Müteferrika's *Cihannüma* edition. However, their iconographic style is borrowed from Blaeu's *Atlas Maior*. Whoever drew them adapted the content of the Dutch maps into his own traditions, and while doing so he also relied heavily on the *Atlas Maior*, especially when it concerns the form and style of the maps.<sup>62</sup>

When analysed closely, it becomes clear that this eighteenth-century atlas prioritises Europe and Asia over other regions of the world. The map depicting Southeast Asia shows clearly how this atlas adapted both European and Muslim traditions and formed its own style (see Figure 11.4).<sup>63</sup> The map is hand copied and south oriented just like the other maps of the manuscript, and is much less detailed than any of the original maps from Blaeu's atlas. However, the cartographer integrates the border and scale markers from *Atlas Maior*, and clearly labels the political and administrative spaces of the Arabian peninsula, India and China. There are also a few topographical markers on this map, with the rivers marked with dark blue and the mountainous regions coloured with light-green shades.

The origin of this eighteenth-century map of Southeast Asia is not clear. It was not possible to confirm whether it was copied directly from Dimaşki's original translation, held at the Topkapı Palace Library. However, since none of the copies of *Cihannüma*, including the large-scale map of the Indian Ocean Basin in Müteferrika's edition, cover this region in such topographic detail it is safe to assume that the copyist or the cartographer copied this map directly from Dimaşki's maps. By the time this abridged version of Dimaşki's translation was prepared, the Ottomans had already dropped their ambitions for an ever-expanding universal empire. Nevertheless, this eighteenth-century atlas reminds its audience of these valuable locations as a nod to Ottoman lore.

Katip Çelebi and Dimaşki and their works participated in the transmission of cartographical knowledge in the Ottoman empire and tried to improve the previous generation's works, especially when it came to the cartographical knowledge of far-flung regions of the world such as India and the Indian Ocean. Katip Çelebi and Dimaşki's translations should be considered as "emulations",

61 Sonja Brentjes, "On Two Manuscripts by Abu Bakr b. Bahram al-Dimashqi (d. 1102/1691) Related to W. and J. Blau's *Atlas Maior*," *Journal of Ottoman Studies* 40 (2012), 184-5.

62 Ibid., 183-91.

63 Dimaşki, *Nusretü'l-İslam ve's-Surur fi Takrir-i Atlas Mayur*, MS Nuruosmaniye, 2996, fol. 77b-78a.

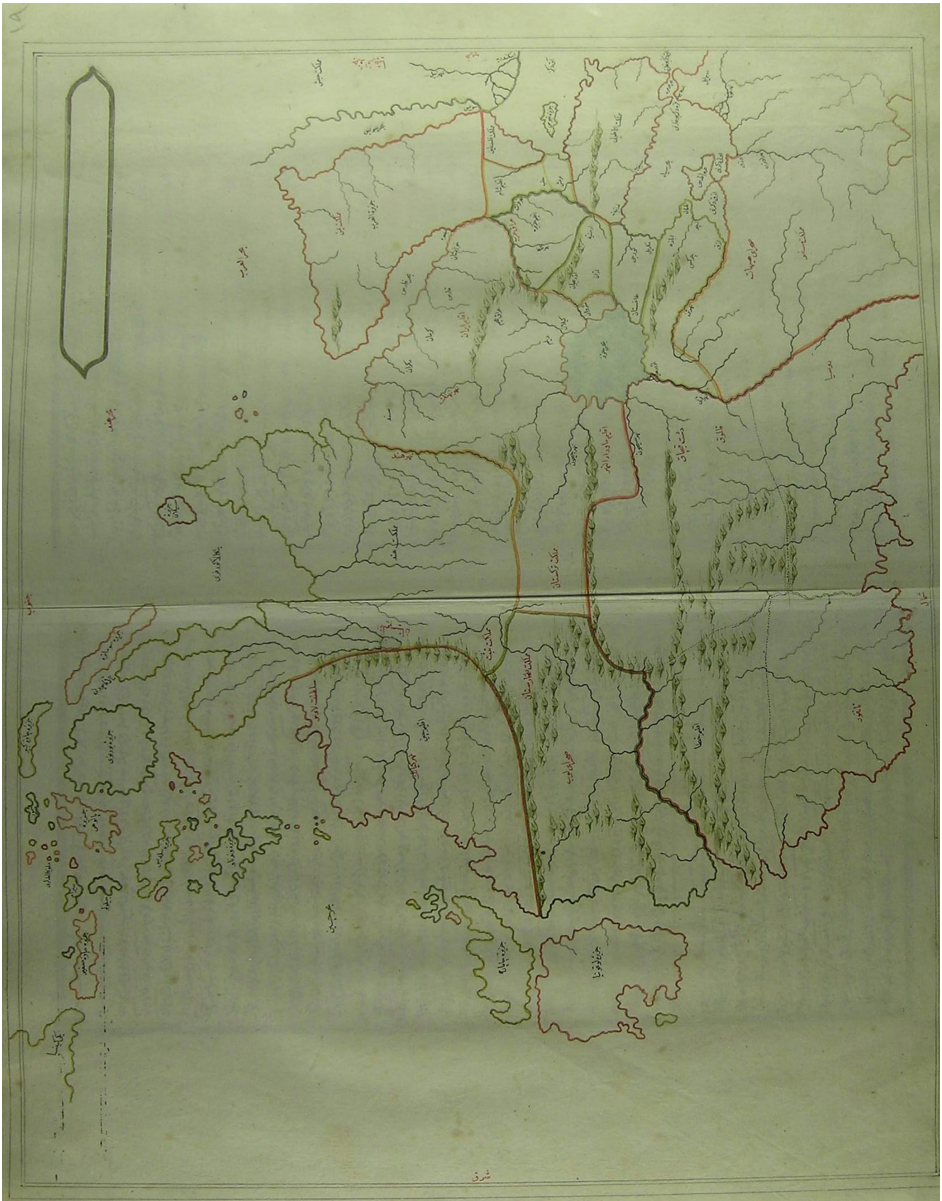


FIGURE 11.4 Map of Southeast Asia. Dimaşki, *The Triumph of Islam and Joy in the Writing of Atlas Maior*. MS Nuruosmaniye, 2996, 77b-78a

through which Ottoman scholars not only adopted European geographical knowledge but also tried to improve it and adapt it to their own cultural and political context.<sup>64</sup> By imitating, improving and adopting European geographical knowledge, these Ottoman scholars reorganised the available cartographical knowledge – in this case, on India and the Indian Ocean – in a manner more accessible for their Ottoman readers.

Ebu Bekir Dimaşki and Katib Çelebi's analysis of the usefulness of geographical knowledge in military affairs of states was in tune with contemporary geographical discussions taking place in Europe. As "geography" became a serious topic of intellectual discussion, intellectuals and rulers continued to use geographical knowledge to articulate their interests. In addition to their practical value on the battlefield, geographical and cartographical works were now important tools to categorise newly discovered lands and to classify different societies, their cultures and histories.<sup>65</sup> Seventeenth-century Ottoman intellectuals engaged in their own discussions on these topics as well. The Ottoman court seemed to take the advice of Katib Çelebi and Dimaşki seriously, and the grand vizier Fazıl Mustafa Paşa used parts of Dimaşki's translation during the siege of Vienna in 1683.

The works discussed in this chapter informed the Ottoman imperial court and literate urbanites of changes in the spatial understanding of the Indian Ocean during the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Both Piri Reis and Seydi Ali Reis were in awe, and perhaps a little afraid, of the region. Their works articulated the calamities and personal experiences that they had endured in the Indian Ocean. Writing during a period of Ottoman geographical expansion, they attracted the attention of the Ottoman court to the dangers of the region and carefully placed it on the margins of the Ottoman world. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a full-scale conquest or even a

64 For a discussion on the importance of emulation for improvements in eighteenth-century political economy, see Sophus Reinert, *Translating Empire: Emulation and Origins of Political Economy*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012); Maxine Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); Jesus Astigarraga and Javier Usoz, "The Enlightenment in Translation: Antonio Genovesi's political economy in Spain, 1778-1800," *Mediterranean Historical Review* 28/1 (2013), 24-45.

65 For a discussion on "geography" and "geographical knowledge" in the eighteenth century, see Charles Withers, *Placing the Enlightenment: Thinking Geographically about the Age of Reason*, (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2007); Charles Withers and Robert J. Mayhew, "Geography: Space, Place and Intellectual History in the Eighteenth Century," *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 34/ 4 (2011): 445-52. On the importance of the new geographical knowledge for the emergence of the sciences in the eighteenth century, see Felicity A. Nussbaum (ed.), *The Global Eighteenth Century* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003).

careful presence in the Indian Ocean was no longer a possibility. Nevertheless, Ottoman geographers continued to shape the Ottoman geographical imagination of the region. The geographical works on the Indian Ocean from this period reflect the changes in the discipline of geography in the Ottoman world. Professional geographers such as Katib Çelebi and Ebu Bekir Dimaşki no longer merely relied on their own experiences or observations but, in fact, sought the latest geographical information on the region. The works and professional careers of these geographers also indicated that both were part of a larger network of knowledge exchange that extended beyond the Ottoman realms. Both geographers left behind the most ambitious works of geography; in doing so, they also ultimately convinced the Ottoman court and the Ottoman literati of the importance of seeking contemporary geographical knowledge in state affairs.

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# Turki Language and Literature in Late Mughal India as Reflected in a Unique Collection of Texts

*Benedek Péri*

## 1 A Short Overview of the History of Turki Literacy in Medieval and Early Modern India<sup>1</sup>

The history of Turki on the Indian subcontinent spans a period of approximately 800 years, from the eleventh to the nineteenth century. Though the steady flow of Turki-speaking migrants to India started with the Ghaznavids, hardly anything is known about the role that Turki language played during their rule or during the period of the Delhi sultanate. From data scattered in various historical and literary sources, including Firishta's chronicle<sup>2</sup> and Amīr Khusraw's *Nuh Sipihr* (The Nine Heavens), it appears that Turki was used mainly by the army and in court circles. According to Amīr Khusraw, treatises on Turki grammar and short vocabularies were compiled to facilitate the learning of the language by soldiers and "wearers of the *kulah*" who were craving to acquire this kind of knowledge.<sup>3</sup> Unfortunately, only a few specimens of independent lemmata and word lists appear to have survived from this period. Qāzī Khān Badr Muḥammad Dihlavī, the author of *Adāt al-Fuḍalā* (The Scholars' Apparatus) compiled in 1419, included in his dictionary Turki words as well.<sup>4</sup> The seventh chapter of the *Farhang-i zafāngūyā va jahānpūyā*, a Persian dictionary compiled by Badr al-Dīn Ibrāhīm in 1433, is a Turkic–Persian

1 For a more detailed analysis, see Benedek Péri, "Turkish Language and Literature in Medieval and Early Modern India," in Ismail K. Poonawala (ed.), *Turks in the Indian Subcontinent, Central and West Asia. The Turkish Presence in the Islamic World* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2017), 227–62.

2 Firishta claims that two Bahmani rulers, 'Alā al-Dīn Mujāhid (r. 1375–8) and Tāj al-Dīn Firūz (r. 1397–1422) were able to speak Turkish. John Briggs (trans.), *History of the rise of Mahomedan power in India. Translated from the original Persian of Mahomed Kasim Ferishta*, Vol. 2 (New Delhi: Low Price Publications, 1990), 203–28. See also Haroon Khan Sherwani, *The Bahmanis of the Deccan* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1985), 82, 100.

3 Mohammad Wahid Mirza (ed.), *The Nuh Sipihr of Amir Khusrau* (London: Oxford University Press, 1949), 173.

4 Solomon I. Baevsii, *Early Persian Lexicography. Farhangs of the Eleventh to the Fifteenth Centuries* (Folkestone: Global Oriental), 2007, 93–4.



word list containing about 500 Turki words<sup>5</sup> and the *Sharaf-nāma-yi Munyari*, a voluminous Persian dictionary written by Ibrāhīm Qiwām al-Dīn Fārūqī in Bengal in 1473-4, also contains a separate section for Turki words at the end of each chapter.<sup>6</sup> The linguistic data in these lexicographical works reflects the everyday vocabulary of a largely Central Asian Turkic population.

The status of Turki changed considerably with the advent of the Mughals. For the Indian branch of the Timurids, the use of Turki as a literary medium was an inseparable part of their cultural legacy. Central Asia witnessed a boom in the production of Turki literary texts during the reign of the Timurids, both in numbers and in quality. Contemporary sources reflect an unprecedented enthusiasm for writing in Turki,<sup>7</sup> a phenomenon that was unheard of under the rule of earlier Turkic dynasties in the region. Royal interest and the constantly widening circle of well-to-do patrons' support undoubtedly gave a strong impetus to the process, but if it had not been for Mīr 'Alī Shīr Navā'ī (1441-1501) the whole movement might have been more limited and much less influential. It is true that there were poets writing in Turkish before Navā'ī as well, but it seems that only a few, including Luṭfī (c. 1367-1463), were able to produce a few verses that "were good enough to be read out to people who possessed poetic talent (*ṭab' ahli*)".<sup>8</sup> The basic problem that littérateurs, especially poets, endeavouring to write in Turki faced was the lack of a reliable classical literary tradition with a corpus of texts that could serve as models. Navā'ī's importance lies in the fact that by producing sample literary texts in every important or popular genre of the Persian tradition he created these models, and through them he established a Central Asian Turkic (Chaghatay) literary tradition that could serve as a reference point for anyone who wished to compose literary texts in Turki. Navā'ī's influence on the development of all the classical Turki literary traditions (Iranian Turkic, Ottoman and Chaghatay)

5 Ibid., 94-104. The Turki word list was published in Robert Dankoff, *The Turkish Vocabulary in the Farhang-i Zafān-gūyā*. Papers on Inner Asia No. 4 (Bloomington, IN: Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies, 1987). For a critical evaluation of Dankoff's edition, see András Bodrogligeti's review in *Türk Dili Araştırmaları Yıllığı-Belleten* (1989), 375-88. On the subject, see also E.N. Nadzhip, "Türkskii ĩazyk deliiskogo sultanata XIV veka," *Sovetskaia türkologiia* 2 (1982), 70-85, and *Sovetskaia türkologiia* 3 (1982), 72-85.

6 Baevskii, *Early Persian Lexicography*, 110-13. Turki words are listed at the end of each chapter under the heading "al-Turkī". See Fārūqī, *Sharaf-nāma-yi Munyari* (Tehran: Kitābkhāna, Mūza, Markaz-i Asnād-i Majlis-i Shūrā-yi Islāmī Ms. t66), 17, 18, 21.

7 Navā'ī mentions quite a few poets in his biographical anthology who composed poetry in Turki. See e.g. Alī-Şīr Nevayī, *Mecālisü'n-Nefāyis*, Vol. 1, edited by Kemal Eraslan (Ankara: Türk Dil Kurumu, 2001), 22, 26, 27, 52, 53, 66-71, 72, 73, etc.

8 'Alī Şīr Nevayī, *Muhākemeti'l-Luġateyn*, ed. F. Sema Barutçu Özönder (Ankara: Atatürk Kültür, Dil ve Tarih Yüksek Kurumu, 1996), 188.

was enormous and it went well beyond the Timurid heartlands. A famous anecdote telling the story of how Bayezid II (r. 1481-1512) ordered the well-known poet Aḥmed Paşa to imitate the *ghazals* that Navā'ī sent him as gifts shows how important a role Navā'ī's poetry played in creating the imperial Ottoman literary paradigm in the late fifteenth century.<sup>9</sup> Navā'ī dictionaries, such as the *Sanglakh* of Mīrzā Mahdī Khān (d. between 1759 and 1768)<sup>10</sup> and the *Bahjat al-Lughat* by Faṭḥ 'Alī Qājār Qazvīnī (mid-nineteenth century),<sup>11</sup> or literary texts imitating Navā'ī's style, indicate the reverence that his oeuvre enjoyed in Safavid and Qajar Iran. The impact of Navā'ī's poetry was felt in Mughal India as well. His work served as a reference point for Humāyūn (r. 1530-40; 1555-6) when he judged the Chaghatay *ghazals* of the Ottoman seaman Seydi Ali Reis in 1555.<sup>12</sup> The amateur turkologist Mīrzā 'Alī Bakht Gurgānī "Aẓfarī" (d. 1818) related in his memoirs that he met a nobleman of Turkic origin in Lucknow who knew Navā'ī's collection of poems by heart.<sup>13</sup>

Developed in an age when Timurid princes ruled over Central Asia, the Chaghatay literary tradition became deeply embedded in the cultural legacy of the dynasty. The first and second generation of Indian Timurids actively took part in contemporary Turki literary life. Bābur (1483-1530) and Kāmran (d. 1557) were acknowledged representatives of Chaghatay literary activities, and Jahāngīr, the fourth ruler of the dynasty (r. 1605-27), expressed his claim to being part of this continuous tradition by the symbolic act of adding a few passages in Turki to Bābur's autobiography, the *Bābur-nāma*.<sup>14</sup> However, the

9 On the influence that Navā'ī's poetry exerted on Ottoman poets, see Sigrid Kleinmichel, "Mīr 'Alīshēr Navā'ī und Aḥmed Pasha," *Archivum Ottomanicum* 17 (1999), 77-211; Yusuf Çetindağ, *Ali Şīr Nevā'ī'nin Osmanlı Şiirine Etkisi* (Ankara: T.C. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2006).

10 Gerald Clauson (ed.), *Sanglax, A Persian Guide to the Turkish Language by Muhammad Mahdī Khān* (London: Luzac and Company, 1960).

11 József Thúry, *A „Behdset-ül-lūgat” című csagatáj szótár* (Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1903).

12 Seydi Ali Reis, *Mir'at al-memalik* (Istanbul, 1313/1895), 54-5.

13 Mīrzā 'Alī-bakht Gurgānī Aẓfarī, *Vāqī'āt-i Aẓfarī*, ed. T. Chandrashekhara (Madras: Government Oriental Manuscripts Library, 1957), 114.

14 It is highly possible that these passages are the so-called "rescue passage" starting on page 144 of the Il'minskiĭ edition: Nikolaĭ Ivanovich Il'minskiĭ (ed.), *Baber-nameh Diagataice ad Fidem Codicis Petropolitani* (Kazan, 1857), and the passages at the end of the same edition (Il'minskiĭ, *Baber-nameh*, 494/8-504/12). Anette Beveridge (trans.), *Bābur-Nāma, (Memoirs of Bābur)* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1990), iii. For the English translation of the rescue passage, see Beveridge, *Bābur-Nāma*, Appendix D, xi-xiii. For a detailed analysis of the passages at the end of the text, see F. Teufel, "Bābur and Abū'l-Fazl," *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 37 (1883), 141-87. Teufel, who did not consult the *Tūzuk-i Jahāngīrī*, did not know that the possible author of the passages was Jahāngīr.

impetus provided by the freshly established literary tradition did not hold long. A series of factors – namely, the paralysing effect of Navā'ī's unique genius; the changes in Persian literary taste in the sixteenth century that made the literary tradition that Navā'ī adopted as a basis for his own Turki version outdated; the lack of poets who could have been able to compose quality content in Turki; and, last but not least, the lack of royal support for poetry in Turki in a basically Persian literary environment – all played their role in the disappearance of Turkish as a popular medium for creating literary products by the second half of the sixteenth century. However, there were some amateur versifiers – such as Āghar Khān, who recited several lines of his Turki poetry to Nādir Shāh in 1739,<sup>15</sup> or Aẓfarī – who tried their hands at composing poems in Turki, but their efforts were the exception in seventeenth and eighteenth-century India.

Nevertheless, the knowledge of Turki, including the ability both to communicate and to appreciate literary works, remained a symbol of belonging to the Timurid elite. The *Mīrzā-nāma*, a seventeenth-century text on how to be a gentleman, shows that knowing the ancestral language of the ruling dynasty became an inseparable part of the evolving Mughal ethos, which heavily influenced the development of the concept of being cultured in seventeenth to eighteenth-century Muslim North India.<sup>16</sup> Besides being a sign of social standing in a multilingual and language-conscious society, Turki could also be used as a medium of communication as is reflected by Āshūr Beg's remarkable *Konversationsbuch*, teaching colloquial Central Asian Turki through a series of dialogues and anecdotes.<sup>17</sup> The status that Turki enjoyed in late Mughal India can be assessed by the number of dictionaries, word lists and grammars written in this period, which all signal a growing demand for such texts.

Although information concerning Turki manuscripts copied in India is scarce, and the data scattered in library catalogues has yet to be fully collected and evaluated, short lists of Turki manuscripts preserved in Indian libraries show that quite a few works were produced in Mughal India on various issues

15 William Irvine, *The Army of the Indian Moghuls* (London: Luzac & Co., 1903), 184.

16 Mohammad Hidayat Husain, "The *Mīrzā Nāmāh* (The Book of the Perfect Gentleman) of *Mīrzā Kāmrān* with an English Translation," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal*, New Series 9 (1913), 4. For a detailed analysis of the work, see Rosalind O'Hanlon, "Manliness and Imperial Service in Mughal North India," *Journal of Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 42/1 (1999), 47-93.

17 András Czertnár, "Egy 19. század eleji keleti török nyelvkönyv társadalomrajzi tanulságai (Sociographic lessons of an Eastern Turkic language course book from the early 19th century)," *Keletkutatás* (2016): 77-104.

of Turkish linguistics.<sup>18</sup> The tradition of Turkish linguistics on the subcontinent had already been established by Amīr Khusraw's time, and the last specimens of the genre were produced in the early nineteenth century. These works include short, versified Turki–Persian word lists (*niṣābs*); more comprehensive lexicographical works, such as Muḥammad Taqī Beg's voluminous *Farhang-i Turki*, written during the reign of Muḥammad Shāh (r. 1719–48);<sup>19</sup> and grammars, including Azfarī's *Mizān-i Turki*, finished in 1794.<sup>20</sup>

Historical sources quite clearly show that the Turkish population of Mughal India came from three areas of the Turkish world. Most were from Central Asia or Iran, while much smaller numbers had their origins in lands under the control of the Ottomans. Library catalogues or data from works like the *Ma'āsir-i Raḥīmī* by 'Abd al-Bāqī Nihāvandī, an early seventeenth-century biography of 'Abd al-Raḥīm Khān-i Khānān (d. 1627),<sup>21</sup> suggest that all these communities were linguistically represented.<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless, the Turkic-language dictionaries and grammars written on the subcontinent are in Central Asian Turkic, which could mean that this version of Turkic was considered to have had the highest prestige and been the most useful in Mughal India.

We now turn to examine the manuscript that forms the focus of the present study, MS Perzsa O. 87, which sheds new light on the position of Turki in Mughal India.

## 2 Manuscript Perzsa O. 87

The manuscript preserved in the Oriental Collection of the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences was donated to the library in 1925 by the heirs of

18 Ali Fuat Bilkan, "Hindistan Kütüphanelerindeki Türkçe El Yazmaları ve Hindistan'da Türkçe," in *Tarihte Türk Hint İlişkileri. Sempozyum Bildirileri 31 Ekim – 1 Kasım 2002* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2006), 351–69.

19 The dictionary was completed in Ahmadnagar on 9 Şafar 1140 (26 September 1727). Muḥammad Taqī Beg, *Farhang-i turkī*, Andhra Pradesh Government Oriental Manuscripts Library Ms. Acq. no. 89.

20 Benedek Péri, "A török írás- és szóbeliség nyomai a mogul-kori Indiában: Mīrzā 'Alī-bakht Gurgānī Azfarī Mizān ut-Turkī című grammatikai értekezése és ami körülötte van (Traces of Turkish Literacy in Mughal India: Mīrzā 'Alī-bakht Gurgānī Azfarī and his treatise on Turkish grammar titled 'Mizān ut-Turkī')," unpublished PhD thesis, Budapest: Eötvös Loránd University, 2000. The text of Azfarī's treatise is included in the Appendix.

21 'Abd al-Raḥīm was the son of Bayrām Khān (d. 1561), a Mughal noble of Baharlu Turkmen origin.

22 'Abd al-Bāqī Nihāvandī, *Ma'āsir-i Raḥīmī*, Vol. 2, ed. Hidāyat Ḥusayn (Calcutta: Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1925), 591.

Alexander Kégl (1862-1920), who was a pioneer in the field of Iranian studies in Hungary. Kégl purchased quite a few Persian manuscripts in his life, most of which seem to have come from India through booksellers in England. His main supplier was A. Maurice, who had shops both in London and in Paris. Although the bookseller's ticket is missing from the volume, a handwritten note in French suggests that it might also have been purchased from Kégl's usual source.

The manuscript – in a purple full-leather binding decorated with an almond-shaped centrepiece, six pendants and tooled edges – consists of seven front flyleaves and 361 folios made of Oriental laid paper that, with the exception of several pages, seems to be of the same quality throughout the volume. The book measures 170 by 92 millimetres and has text blocks of 130 to 155 millimetres by 70 to 80 millimetres. It appears to be a personal scrapbook (*safīna*) consisting of a great number of unrelated Persian and Turki texts, most of which contain selections from the oeuvre of sixteenth- to seventeenth-century poets whose work was popular in Mughal India. Some of the poetic selections occupy only a couple of pages while the longest continuous section, a poetic anthology, is more than seventy pages long.

Texts included in the volume were copied during a long span of time, with 24 Jumādā al-awwal 1170 (14 February 1757) (fol. 295<sup>v</sup>) the first and Muḥarram 1175 (August 1761) (fol. 324<sup>v</sup>) the last dates mentioned in the volume. The order of the sections does not reflect the chronological order of their transcription. Though according to the colophons the *ghazaliyyāt* section of Fuḏūlī's *Dīvān* was copied in Rajab 1173 (February 1760), three years later than the *Beng ü Bāde*, it precedes the *maṣnavī*, which would suggest that either the various texts included in the volume were bound together after the date of their transcription or, alternatively, that the volume was rebound at an unknown date.

The only scribe whose name appears in the volume is Mīr Sa'd Allāh, whose name occurs twice in the colophons – first at the end of the long poetic anthology dated 5 Sha'bān 1172 (3 April 1759), and then in the colophon of Fuḏūlī's *Beng ü Bāde*. The style of handwriting would suggest that most of the texts were copied by the same person, but the place of copying is not referred to anywhere in the volume. However, a number of clues scattered in the texts all suggest that the manuscript was compiled in India. The script used throughout the volume is an Indian variation of *nasta'liq* often encountered in eighteenth-century Persian manuscripts copied in India. The second front flyleaf recto contains three chronograms on the birth, ascension to the throne and death of the Mughal ruler Aurangzeb 'Ālamgīr. There is also a partially legible ownership stamp on the sixth front flyleaf recto, with the word "Rāy" as part of the name – which might be Gulāb Rāy, suggesting an Indian owner (see Figure 12.1). Poetical selections included in the volume bear a distinctly Indo-Persian

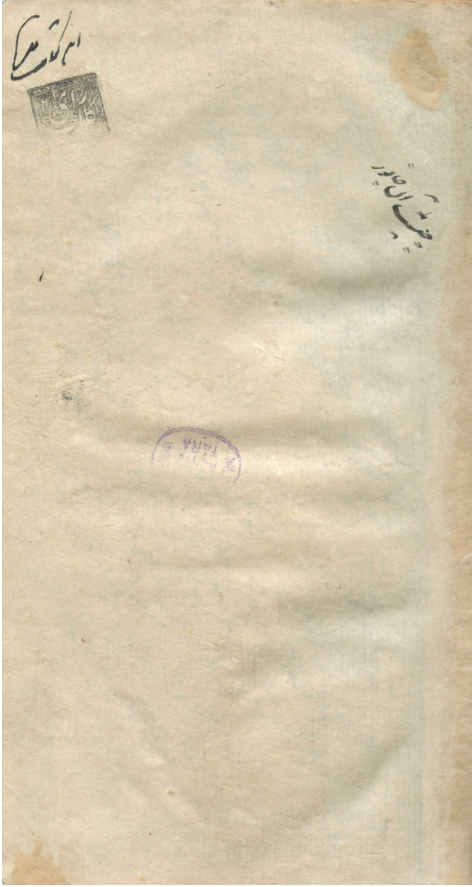


FIGURE 12.1

MS Perzsa O 87: Ownership stamp on the sixth front flyleaf, recto (courtesy of the Oriental Collection of the Library and Information Centre of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences)

character, focusing on the output of poets who had close connections with India during the Mughal period, either as natives born on the subcontinent or as immigrants from Iran looking for employment at various Indian courts. The inclusion of a versified Persian-Hindi vocabulary, and the appearance of *Mullā Du Piyāza*, a legendary character popular in Indian lore, further confirm the perception that the *majmū'a* was compiled in the subcontinent.

### 3 The Turkish Texts

The longest Turkish text of the volume is *Fuzūlī's Dīvān*,<sup>23</sup> which consists of the usual prose preface and separate sections containing the poet's poems, including 253 *gazals*, 60 *rubā'īs*, a *tarjī' band*, several *mukhammases*, *murabba'as*,

23 MS Perzsa O. 87, fols 195<sup>v</sup>-200<sup>v</sup>, 203<sup>r</sup>-268<sup>r</sup>, 269<sup>r</sup>-273<sup>r</sup>, 273<sup>r</sup>-283<sup>v</sup>, 287<sup>r</sup>-295<sup>v</sup>.

numerous *qit'as* and the approximately 400-couplet-long *Beng ü Bāde*. Like Navā'ī, Fuzūlī was an iconic author of the classical Turkish poetical tradition whose poems were appreciated and acknowledged everywhere within the Persianate Turkish cultural sphere between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. His poetry was equally popular in the Ottoman empire; Iran; Central Asia; and, as catalogues of Indian libraries suggest, on the Indian subcontinent as well.<sup>24</sup> Fuzūlī's popularity meant that his poems were copied over a wide geographical area, by scribes who hailed from different linguistic environments and used different orthographic systems. This gave rise to three branches of the Fuzūlī textual tradition; the Ottoman, the Central Asian and the Iranian.

Fuzūlī lived all his life in Iraq as a professional poet, and he constantly tried to earn the appreciation of well-to-do patrons. He sought the support of Safavid officials in the early 1500s, and after the Ottomans occupied Baghdad in 1534 he switched sides and started looking for support among the Ottoman elite. It is not without reason to believe that Fuzūlī's poems originally reflected the slightly different literary tastes of his prospective supporters, and poems written in his "Safavid period" were linguistically closer to Iranian Turkic while those written in the post-1534 period were closer to Ottoman. Without an autographed copy of Fuzūlī's *Dīvān* this theory cannot be confirmed, but it appears to be supported a very early copy completed in the author's lifetime in Sha'bān 956 (August–September 1549), which shows both Iranian Turkic/Azeri and Ottoman linguistic and orthographic features.<sup>25</sup>

Though Fuzūlī's poetry had already been acknowledged by his Ottoman colleagues as early as the mid-1540s, his poems only became widely circulated in the Ottoman empire in the 1580s. They were quickly absorbed into the Ottoman literary tradition and a great number of manuscripts of the *Dīvān* were produced in the following centuries. Manuscripts copied on Ottoman soil tend to be Ottomanised, both linguistically and orthographically. One characteristically Ottoman linguistic and orthographic feature, the Iranian Turkic/Azeri word *daş*, "stone" (داش), most often appears in Ottoman manuscripts written with an initial *ṭā* as *taş* (طاش) and Turkish words that have back vowels and start with [s] are usually written with an initial *şād*, like in the utterance

24 A copy of the *Dīvān* is kept in the library of the Asiatic Society of Bengal – Wladimir Ivanow, *Concise Descriptive Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the Collection of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* (Calcutta: Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1924), 788 – and Ali Fuat Bilkan lists altogether six manuscripts of the *Dīvān* preserved in other Indian libraries. Bilkan, "Hindistan Kütüphanelerindeki," 356.

25 Fuzūlī, *Dīvān*, Milli Kütüphanesi, Ankara MS. A-140. The date of copying appears on fol. 81<sup>v</sup>.

appearing in one of Fuẓūlī's *ghazals*, *suya saldı servini* (صویه صالدى سرونى) "he/she threw his/her cypress into the water".<sup>26</sup>

Fuẓūlī's poetry started attracting attention in Central Asia towards the end of the sixteenth century, and the relatively large number of lithographed editions published in Tashkent in the nineteenth century indicate that it did not lose its popularity during subsequent centuries.<sup>27</sup> The Central Asian textual tradition as reflected by these lithographed editions tends to be linguistically Iranian Turkic and orthographically Central Asian, with Iranian Turkic/Azeri forms of words prevailing and the initial [s] in Turkish words with back vowels always written with a *sīn* (س). The above-quoted phrase appears as *سویه سالمش سرونى* in the 1891 lithographed Tashkent edition.<sup>28</sup> Another feature of the Central Asian Turkic orthographic system is that the velar nasal consonant [ŋ], which is represented by a single *kāf* (ك) in Ottoman, is written with a combination of a *nūn* and a *kāf* (نك).

Fuẓūlī manuscripts from Iran and Azerbaijan are often of a mixed character. Though their language is basically Iranian Turkic, Ottoman forms also appear occasionally. The same is true for orthographical tendencies. The initial [s] of Turkish words having back vowels often appears either written with a *sīn* (س) or a *ṣād* (ص) within the same manuscript. The expression *suya salmuş servini*, for example is written in a mixed manner in a manuscript completed in 1648 and preserved today in the Kitābkhāna-yi Millī in Tehran. The first word starts with a *sīn* while the second one has an initial *ṣād* (صویه سالمش).<sup>29</sup> Similarly to the Central Asian Turkic orthographical system, the velar nasal consonant [ŋ] is written with a combination of two letters (نك) in Turkish manuscripts copied in Iran and Azerbaijan.

The text of Fuẓūlī's poems in the Budapest *majmū'a* is of a mixed character showing both Ottoman and Azeri features. The verb phrase *daşra salmuş* in the line *Daşra salmuş gibi 'aks-i mey-i gül-gün mīnā* ("The flask projected the reflection of the rose coloured wine") contains the adverb *daşra* ("out") in an Iranian Turkic/Azeri form and the verbal form *salmuş* ("cast") is written in a standard

26 Fuẓūlī, *Dīvān*, Universitätsbibliothek Leipzig, Ms. Cod. Turk 028, fol. 10<sup>v</sup>.

27 The earliest copy of Fuẓūlī's works preserved in a Central Asian library was completed in 1581. A.A. Semenov, *Sobranie vostochnykh rukopisei Akademii Nauk Uzbekskoi SSR* (Tashkent: Akademiia Nauk Uzbekskoi SSR, 1954) 250-1. For a list of the lithographed editions, see B. Qosimkhonov, H. Lutfillaev and Sh. Islamov (eds), *O'zbek tildagi toshbosma kitoblar katalogi* (Tashkent: Davlat Sharqshunoslik Instituti, 2014) 29-35.

28 Fuẓūlī, *Dīvān-i Maulānā Fuẓūlī ma' Laylī Majnūn* (Tashkent: S.I. Lakhtin, 1891), 18.

29 Fuẓūlī, *Dīvān*, Tehran, Sāzmān-i Asnād va Kitābkhāna-yi Millī-yi Jumhūrī-yi Islāmī-yi Īrān, MS. 5-31063, 13<sup>v</sup>.



Ottoman way (داشره سالمش).<sup>30</sup> Turkish words having back vowels and an initial [s] are written in most cases with *sīn*, like in the phrase *suya salmuş* (سویه سالمش),<sup>31</sup> but in several cases the initial *šād* also occurs. One example is the *ghazal* starting with the line *Şubḥ şalıp mihr-i rukhuḡdan nikāb* (“Dawn cast away the veil from the sun of your face”), where all forms of the verb *şal-* are written with an initial *šād* (صالوب، صالمه، صالدى).<sup>32</sup> The nasal velar [ŋ] is always written with a combination of a *nūn* and a *kāf* (نک). The initial consonant of S/ı Turkish pronoun, *men* (“I”) in Iranian Turkic/Azeri and *ben* in Ottoman, occurs in both forms. These are either written with an initial *m-* or an initial *b-* and its dative form occurs both as *manga* (منکا) and (باڭا) بنکا.

The mixed Iranian Turkic/Azeri–Ottoman nature of the Budapest text suggests that the present copy was made from a text originally copied in Iran. In the light of data provided by contemporary historical sources, including ‘Abd al-Bāqī Nihāvandī’s account of ‘Abd al-Raḥīm Khān-i Khānān’s (d. 1627) knowledge of various Turkic dialects, it has already been surmised that Iranian Turkic/Azeri was part of the Indian Turkic-language scene.<sup>33</sup> Nevertheless, the copy of Fuḡūlī’s *Dīvān* as it is preserved in the present anthology is the first direct textual evidence showing that native speakers of Iranian Turkic/Azeri looking for employment in India brought texts written in Turki.

The anthology contains another equally interesting poetic text in Turki titled *Muntakhab-i Dīvān-i Turki-yi ‘Ubaydī* in the colophon.<sup>34</sup> The section is seventeen folios long and includes a selection of mainly unpublished poems,<sup>35</sup> all composed by ‘Ubayd Allāh Khān (r. 1534–9), a Shaybanid ruler of Bukhara whom the scribe calls the pādshāh of Balkh. According to the date given in the colophon, this section was finished in Muḥarram 1175 (August 1761). Though the name of the scribe is not mentioned, the style of the handwriting suggests that this part was also transcribed by Mīr Sa’d Allāh.

Though ‘Ubaydī was a prolific author and a major representative of the Chaghatay literary tradition in the sixteenth century, his influence on later generations seems to have been rather limited. Only four manuscripts of his *Dīvān* are known and, except for the hitherto unpublished Tashkent *Kulliyāt*, none of the

30 MS Perzsa O. 87, fol. 208<sup>v</sup>.

31 Ibid., fol. 211<sup>v</sup>.

32 Ibid., fol. 210<sup>r</sup>.

33 Nihāvandī, *Ma‘āsir-i Raḥīmī*, Vol. 11, 591.

34 MS Perzsa O. 87, fols 316<sup>v</sup>–324<sup>v</sup>.

35 There are 34 *ghazals*, one *mukhammas*, one *tarjī-band*, one *musaddas* and several choice couplets. Only four of the 34 *ghazals* appeared in print, in a short anthology of ‘Ubaydī’s poems published in Tashkent. Qul Ubaydiy, *Vafo qilsang. Turkiy devondan namunalar*, ed. A. Hayitmetov (Tashkent: Yozuvchi, 1994), 7–8, 17, 19, 20–1.

volumes contains his whole oeuvre.<sup>36</sup> Knowing that Navā'ī's oeuvre overshadowed the works of any other poet composing poetry in Chaghatay and that for many his poetry represented the Chaghatay tradition, the inclusion of 'Ubaydī in an anthology copied in India is most unusual. It should be added here that 'Ubaydī's poems appear in another eighteenth-century Mughal *majmū'a*;<sup>37</sup> still, their presence in the Budapest anthology suggests that the compiler of the volume knew the Chaghatay poetic tradition quite intimately. He seems to have been a literary connoisseur who selected the poetic pieces that he intended to include in his personal anthology very consciously.

This perception of the compiler's literary taste is strengthened by a short third section that consists of two folios, which also contain poetry in Turki (fol. 325). There is a *qaṣīda* and two bilingual Persian–Turki *ghazals*. The short *qaṣīda* was composed by Bayrām Khān (1561), one of the last major representatives of the Chaghatay literary tradition in India.<sup>38</sup> The first, macaronic poem is by Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī (d. 1273),<sup>39</sup> and the second one, according to the *nom de plume* appearing in the last couplet, is by Jāmī (d. 1492).

Besides literary texts, the Turki section of the *majmū'a* also includes several linguistic texts, conjugation paradigms of Turkish verbs, fragments of two longer Turki–Persian word lists (see Figure 12.2) and two versified vocabularies, or *niṣābs*. The first of these,<sup>40</sup> completed on 3 Muharram 1175 (4 August 1761), was originally written by a certain Muḥammad Yādgār between 965 (1557–8) and 970 (1562–3) during the reign of Mīrzā 'Īsā Tarkhān (r. 1554–67), an independent ruler of Sindh, and is dedicated to the ruler's son Muḥammad Bāqī Tarkhān (d. 1585). The author, who lived at many different locations during his life – including Iraq, Khurasan and Transoxiana<sup>41</sup> – was induced to write his work by the intention to facilitate communication between Turks and Tajiks or, as he puts it, “so that the speakers of the forest of bravery called Turks and the sugar stealing parrots of eloquence who are famous for their Persian tongue

36 Henry Franciscus Hofmann, *Turkish Literature. A Bio-Bibliographical Survey*, Vol. 6 (Utrecht: Library of the University of Utrecht, 1969), 47–8. For the detailed description of the *Kullīyyāt*, see Semenov, *Sobranie*, 244–7.

37 Ivanow, *Concise Descriptive Catalogue*, 801. The *majmū'a* preserved in the library of the Asiatic Society of Bengal in Kolkata seems to be contemporaneous with the Budapest manuscript (*ibid.*, 413).

38 Tekcan, *Bayram Han'ın Türkçe Divanı*, 63–6.

39 Some of the lines are missing from the poem. For the complete poem, see Mecdut Mansuroğlu, “Mevlāna Celāleddin Rumī'de Türkçe Beyit ve İbareler,” *Türk Dili Araştırmaları Yıllığı – Belleten* (1954), 210–11.

40 MS Perzsa O. 87, fols 301<sup>r</sup>–309<sup>f</sup>.

41 MS Perzsa O. 87, fol. 302<sup>v</sup>.



could converse with each other".<sup>42</sup> The text is written in the form of short *qit'as* composed in various metres. The Turki words are more or less thematically grouped, although it is clear that the requirements of a given metre limited the author's choices of words. Muḥammad Yādġār's poetic skills suggest that he was an educated person, and the use of the phrase *in qadr* ("to this extent") in its Turkish form of *in qadar* in the opening couplet of one of the poems composed in *ramal-i muṣamman-i maḥzūf* hints at his Turkish lineage.<sup>43</sup> The Budapest manuscript is not the sole copy of this short Central Asian Turkish–Persian vocabulary, as another, slightly defective, copy of the text is preserved in the library of the Salar Jung Museum in Hyderabad.<sup>44</sup>

The other, fourteen-page *nisāb*,<sup>45</sup> originally written during the reign of the Mughal emperor Jahāngīr (r. 1605–27), consists of several short *maṣnavīs* composed in various metres and is full of metrical mistakes. The Turki words explained in the text come from a Central Asian Turkic dialect. This has a special feature, whereby the initial *y-* disappears before close unrounded front and back vowels [i] and [u]. So, instead of the usual forms *yigit-* "young man", *yetti-* "seven", *yigirme-* "twenty", *etmiş-* "seventy", *bu yıl-* "this year" and *yılan-* "snake" the vocabulary has the variants *igit*, *etti*, *igirme*, *etmiş*, *bu il*, and *ılan* respectively.

There are two short sections on Central Asian Turkic linguistics in the volume, both of which are very similar.<sup>46</sup> The first one contains declension of the verb *uyqula-* "sleep"; the second one the various forms of the verb *kel-* "come", followed by a list of nouns starting with the letter *alif* and a list of verbs also starting with the same letter. Both lists are full of mistakes, and they seem to have been part of a more comprehensive lexicographical work. Some of the nouns on the list also appear in Faẓl Allāh Khān's *Lughat-i Turki*, a Turkish–Persian dictionary compiled in the late seventeenth century.<sup>47</sup> The word *ülker-* "the pleiades", for example, is erroneously written as *اوککر* in both lists<sup>48</sup> and it appears in the same form in Faẓl Allāh Khān's dictionary,<sup>49</sup> and the meaning of the word *öküz-* "ox" written in both lists as *اوکور* is erroneously given as *asb-i*

42 MS Perzsa O. 87, fol. 301<sup>r</sup>.

43 MS Perzsa O. 87, fol. 302<sup>v</sup>.

44 *Nisāb-i Turkī*. Salar Jung Museum, Hyderabad, MS Lt. 21.

45 MS. Perzsa O.87, fols 309<sup>v</sup>–316<sup>r</sup>.

46 MS Perzsa O. 87, fols 201<sup>r</sup>–202<sup>v</sup>, 284<sup>r</sup>–286<sup>v</sup>.

47 Charles Ambrose Storey, *Persian Literature. A Bio-Bibliographical Survey* 111/1 (Leiden: Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, 1984), 111–12.

48 MS Perzsa O. 87, fols 201<sup>v</sup>, 285<sup>r</sup>.

49 Faẓl Allāh Khān, *Lughat-i Turkī* (Calcutta: Ṭab'khāna-yi Shaykh Hidāyat Allāh, 1825), 78.

*nar*- “male horse/stallion” – a mistake that also occurs in Fażl Allāh Khān’s dictionary.<sup>50</sup>

The evident mistakes appearing in these linguistic texts raise the question of how well the copyist or copyists knew Turki. Since parts of the anthology copied by Mīr Sa’d Allāh are free of such errors, it is reasonable to believe that the word lists were copied by another hand and they were added to the volume later when the whole anthology received its present binding. The differences in the style of handwriting, the fact that the prose preface is separated from the rest of Fużūlī’s *Dīvān* by one of the linguistic sections and the way in which the other linguistic section cuts off the text of the *Beng ü Bāde* from the other parts of the *dīvān* seem to confirm this theory (see Figure 12.3).

The errors and mistakes clearly indicate that the copyist(s) of the linguistic sections did not know Turkish well. Mīr Sa’d Allāh, on the other hand, was quite well versed in the language. Sections copied by him are without mistakes. Marginal and interlinear notes in Fużūlī’s *Dīvān* explaining the meaning of words like *olmaya*- “let it not be” or *saçmaghdadur*- “being in the process of sprinkling”, and vocal signs appearing in some Oghuz or Western Turkic verbal forms, such as *olan*- “being” (اولان) or *qılduqda*- “when being done” (قیلدۇقده), indicate that he was not too familiar with this dialect.<sup>51</sup> Orthographical mistakes which ruin the original Turkish vocal harmony include the forms *getürmagh*- “to take away” (گتورمغ), *yetürmagh*- “to make reach” (یتورمغ), *olgeç*- “after being/having been” (اولکج), and all suggest that vocal harmony was not a natural instinct for the scribe.<sup>52</sup> Since these type of errors often occur in Indian Turkish texts they could mean that Mīr Sa’d Allāh was not a first-generation immigrant from Central Asia and knew a version of Turkish – perhaps an Uzbek dialect in which, due to the influence of vowel-poor languages like Persian, the Turkish vocal harmony had already disappeared or was on the way towards disappearing.

The apparently very carefully and consciously selected texts included in this personal anthology suggest that the original compiler, Mīr Sa’d Allāh, was a late-Mughal gentleman, a real *mīrzā*. He was well versed in Indo-Persian poetry; knew the contemporary literary trends; had a definite literary taste; and, above all, knew Turki very well. As far as the Turki texts included in the manuscript are concerned, they provide the reader with a snapshot of the status of the Turki language in late-Mughal India. The anthology contains a comprehensive collection of texts from almost all Turki genres known in Mughal times,

50 MS Perzsa O. 87, fols 201<sup>v</sup>, 285<sup>r</sup>; Fażl Allāh Khān, *Lughat*, 77.

51 MS Perzsa O. 87, fol. 198<sup>r</sup>/line 2, 7; 198<sup>v</sup>/line 2, 7.

52 MS Perzsa O. 87, fol. 288<sup>r</sup>/line 23; 288<sup>v</sup>/line 16.

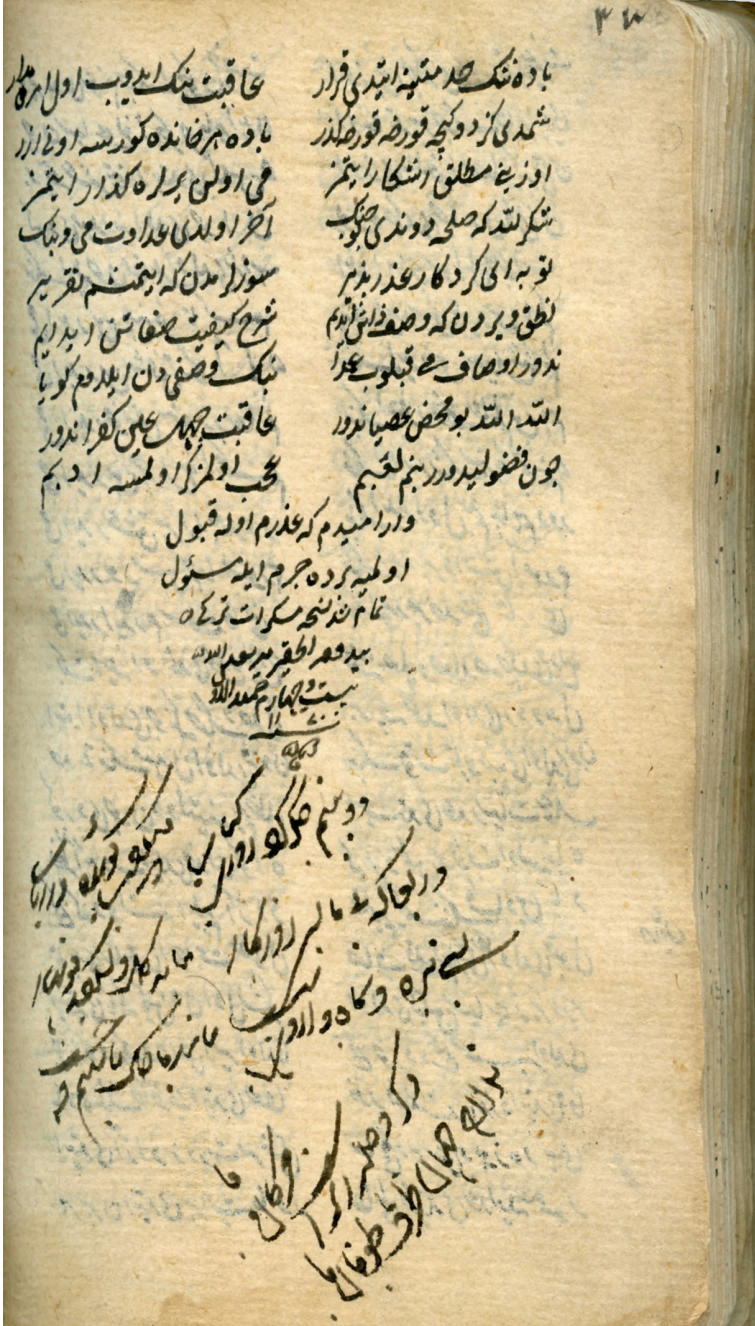


FIGURE 12.3 MS Perzsa O 87: Scribe's colophon at the end of Fuzūlī's *Beng ü Bāde* (fol. 295<sup>v</sup>) (courtesy of the Oriental Collection of the Library and Information Centre of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences)

including literary texts from poets which were considered the classics of the Turki literary tradition. In addition, language-learning aids and short works on Turki linguistics – such as Turki–Persian word lists, conjugation paradigms and versified Turki–Persian vocabularies, most of which were written in a Central Asian Turkic dialect – are also found.

## Appendix

### *The Manuscript Perzsa O. 87*

The detailed page-by-page list of the volume's contents is as follows:

1. Selected couplets and a full *ghazal* by Ṣā'ib Tabrīzī (1592-1670) (fol. 1<sup>r</sup>).
2. A *ghazal* by Ṣā'ib (fol. 1<sup>v</sup>).
3. Select lines by poets like Ṣā'ib, Faṣīḥī (d. 1640), Qāsim Dīvāna (fl. eighteenth century)<sup>53</sup> (fols. 2<sup>r</sup>–2<sup>v</sup>).
4. Select verses by Indo-Persian poets, including Bayānī, who lived in the Deccan during the reign of Aurangzeb (r. 1658-1707);<sup>54</sup> Badrī Samarqandī, who stayed at the court of Burhān Niẓām Shāh I. (d. 1554) in the Deccan;<sup>55</sup> Bīqaydī; Abū al-Mu'jib Qumī; Mawlānā Nūr al-Dīn Muḥammad Khān "Tarkhān" (d. 994);<sup>56</sup> Taqī Isfahānī (973-1040)<sup>57</sup> (fols. 3<sup>r</sup>–3<sup>v</sup>).
5. Fols 4<sup>r</sup>–73<sup>v</sup> contain a longer anthology of choice verses arranged more or less in alphabetical order according to the name of their authors. The anthology is preceded by a short preface in prose. This section of the volume was finished by Mīr Sa'd Allāh on 5 Sha'bān 1172 (3 April 1759). Poets whose lines are included in the anthology are: Umīdī (d. 1519), Aḥmad Khān Gīlānī (d. 1596), Kāmī (fl. early seventeenth century),<sup>58</sup> Shāh Muḥammad Unsī Qandahārī, Sulṭān Muḥammad, Amānī Isfahānī, Mīr Amānī Kānī, Adāyī Isfahānī, Ashkī Qumī (d. 1564),<sup>59</sup> Adham Bīg Qazvīnī, Abtarī Badakhshī, Maulānā Qāsim-i Arslan (d. 1586),<sup>60</sup> Mīrzā Aṣghar

53 Henry Franciscus Hofmann, *Turkish Literature. A Bio-Bibliographical Survey*, Vol. 5 (Utrecht: Library of the University of Utrecht, 1969), 49-50.

54 Nabi Hadī, *Dictionary of Indo-Persian Literature* (New Delhi: Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts-Abhinav Publications, 1995), 125.

55 Nazir Ahmad, "Language and Literature: Persian," in H.K. Sherwani and P.M. Joshi (eds), *History of the Medieval Deccan*, Vol. 11 (Hyderabad, India: Government of Andhra Pradesh, 1974), 79, 89-91.

56 Hadi Hasan, *Mughal Poetry: Its Culture and Historical Value* (Aligarh, 1952), 33.

57 Hadi, *Dictionary*, 591.

58 Aḥmad Gulchīn Ma'ānī, *Kārvān-i Hind*. Vol. 2 (Mashhad: Mu'assasa-yi Chāp va Intishārāt-i Āstān-i Quds-i Raẓavī, 1369 [1990]) 1152-1159.

59 Hadi, *Dictionary*, 91; Gulchīn Ma'ānī, *Kārvān-i Hind*, Vol. 1, 74-8.

60 Hadi, *Dictionary*, 487-8.

Mashhadī, Nazrī, Qılıj Muḥammad Khān Jānī Qurbānī (d. 1614), Adham Kāshī, Ulfatī Yazdī, Ḥaydar Big Anīsī Tabrīzī, Mīrzā Mīrak Riżawī, Khvāja Muḥammad, Jāmī, Bināyī Harawī (d. 1512), Akbar Shāh, Bayrām Khān Khān-i Khānān valad-i Sayf ‘Alī Big (d. 1561), Salmān (d. 1376), Mullā Bikasī Ghaznavī (d. 1565),<sup>61</sup> Mīr ‘Abd al-Bāqī Isfahānī, Muḥammad Khān Bihrūz, Sulṭān Maḥmūd Ghaznavī, Muḥammad Bāqir Bāqī, Mullā Ismā‘īl Bakhtī Qazvīnī Bakhtī, Bāqī Shushtarī, Bāqī Qazvīnī, Āshufī, Kallapaz Sabzavārī Abharī, Šānī, Ḥusayn Sanā‘ī Mashhadī (d. 1582), Jāmī, Ḥazrat Shaykh Jalāl Rūḥī, Mīrzā Sulṭān Ibrāhīm “Jānī”, Mullā Qāsim Qānūnī, Jānī Sindī, Shaykh Jamālī Dihlavī (d. 1536),<sup>62</sup> Shaykh Gadāyī pisar-i Shaykh Jamālī (d. 1568), Jamīl al-Dīn “Jamīlī”, Ja‘farī Isfahānī, Mīr Sayyid ‘Alī, Pādshāhqulī Jazbī, Mīrzā Ibrāhīm Badakhshī Chākīr, Jānī Bukhārā[ī], Ja‘far, Jannatī, Ḥasan Māwarā al-Nahrī Mu‘ammāyī, Qāzī Quṭb al-Dīn Ḥamdī, Ḥasan Qazvīnī, Ḥaydarī Tabrīzī, Ḥużūrī, Ḥakkākī, Ḥaydar Javid Tabrīzī, Ḥarfī, Ḥaydar Sabzavārī, Ḥarifī Sāvajī, Ḥayrānī Qumī, Muḥammad Ḥusayn Tabrīzī, Qāzī Mīr Ḥusayn Hamadānī, Qāsim Beg Ḥālatī, Ḥisābī Naṭanzī, Bābā Fiğānī, Ḥazīnī Tabrīzī, Ḥazrat Kirmānī, Yādgār Muḥammad Jānī Saljūqī, Amīr Khusraw Dihlavī (d. 1325), Khān-i A‘zam Khān Kūkaltash (d. 1624), Muḥammad Yūsuf Khān pisar-i A‘zam Khān and Khvāja Mīr Shams al-Dīn ‘Alī Khurāsānī.

6. An entry on ‘Ubayd-i Zākānī (d. 1370) from a hitherto unidentified *tazkira* (fols 74<sup>r</sup>-74<sup>v</sup>).
7. ‘Ubayd-i Zākānī’s humorous vocabulary (fols 74<sup>v</sup>-75<sup>v</sup>).
8. A few entries from the same work, ascribed here to Mullā Du Piyāza, a witty character from the reign of Akbar (fols 75<sup>v</sup>-76<sup>r</sup>).
9. A humorous poem by Mullā Qanbar Kashmīrī (fols 76<sup>v</sup>-77<sup>v</sup>).
10. Select lines by Sūzanī Samarqandī (d. 1173) (fols 77<sup>v</sup>-78<sup>v</sup>).
11. A short medical text in Persian (fols 79<sup>v</sup>-80<sup>v</sup>).
12. Fol. 81<sup>r</sup> contains select couplets under the heading *Fī l-hazl* and is dated 1098/1686-7 at the end. It also contains a short recipe of a medicine called *tiryāq-i arba‘a* and a poem with a medical subject.
13. A story on the Prophet Muḥammad, partly in Arabic (fols 82<sup>r</sup>-82<sup>v</sup>).
14. A versified Persian–Hindi word list in *qaṣīda* form (fols 83<sup>r</sup>-83<sup>v</sup>).
15. Select couplets by poets like Nizāmī (d. 1209), Suhaylī (fl. fifteenth century), Firdawsī (d. c. 1020) and verses by hitherto unidentified poets (fols 84<sup>r</sup>-85<sup>v</sup>).
16. An Arabic quote; two *ghazals*, one of them by Faṣīḥī (fol. 86<sup>r</sup>).
17. Select couplets, one of them by Amīr Khusraw (fol. 86<sup>v</sup>).
18. An anthology of select couplets from the *dīvān* of Sa‘īdā (fols 87<sup>r</sup>-91<sup>v</sup>).
19. A poem in *maṣnavī* form (fol. 92<sup>r</sup>).

61 Ibid., 132.

62 Ibid., 278-9.



20. Couplets by Sālim (fol. 92<sup>v</sup>).
21. Two *qaṣīdas* by Mullā Zihnī (fl. sixteenth to seventeenth century)<sup>63</sup> (fols 93<sup>r</sup>-94<sup>r</sup>).
22. Fol. 94<sup>v</sup> contains an anthology of humorous couplets by ‘Ālī.
23. An anthology of select couplets and poems composed by Nāṣir ‘Alī Sirhindī (d. 1696);<sup>64</sup> the excerpts are arranged in alphabetical order (fols 95<sup>r</sup>-113<sup>r</sup>).
24. Fols 113<sup>v</sup>-135<sup>r</sup> contain an anthology of select couplets and poems by Asīrī Shahrīstānī (d. 1649). The section ends with select couplets by Shāpūr Tīhrānī (d. c. 1621), Faṣīḥī, Rīzā, Qudsī.
25. A similar anthology of select couplets by Vaḥīd Qazvīnī (d. c. 1708) completed on 14 Muḥarram 1173 (7 September 1759). The section ends with select couplets by Vaḥīd Qamarī, Madhūsh, Faṣīḥī and ‘Arshī (d. 1681)<sup>65</sup> (fols 135<sup>v</sup>-157<sup>r</sup>).
26. Poetic quotations, select couplets, among them a chronogram on the death of Faṣāḥat Khān “Rāzī” (fl. Muḥammad Shāh’s reign) (fols 157<sup>v</sup>-161<sup>v</sup>).
27. Fols 162<sup>r</sup>-193<sup>r</sup> contain an anthology of select lines and full poems composed by Muḥtasham Kāshānī (d. 1588).
28. Select poems by Sā’ib, Qudsī, Faṣīḥī and Jūyā Tabrīzī (d. 1706)<sup>66</sup> (fols 193<sup>v</sup>-194<sup>v</sup>).
29. The foreword of Fuḏūlī’s (d. 1556) Turki *dīvān* (fols 195<sup>v</sup>-200<sup>v</sup>).
30. Turki–Persian word lists (fols 201<sup>r</sup>-202<sup>v</sup>).
31. Fols 203<sup>r</sup>-268<sup>r</sup> contain *ghazals* by Fuḏūlī. This section is dated Rajab 1173 (February 1760).
32. Fol. 268<sup>v</sup> contains select lines by Nīzāmī.
33. Fols 269<sup>r</sup>-273<sup>r</sup> contain Fuḏūlī’s Turki *rubā’īs*.
34. Fols 273<sup>r</sup>-283<sup>v</sup> contain Turki poem’s by Fuḏūlī composed in various genres.
35. Fols 284<sup>r</sup>-286<sup>v</sup> contain two short lexicographical works on Turki.
36. Fols 287<sup>r</sup>-295<sup>v</sup> contain Fuḏūlī’s narrative poem *Beng ü Bāde*.<sup>67</sup> This section of the manuscript was completed on 24 Jumada al-awwal 1170 (14 February 1757).
37. Fols 296<sup>r</sup>-299<sup>r</sup> contain select poems by Rumi, ‘Ayn al-Quzzāt Hamadānī (d. 1131), Bū ‘Alī Sīnā, ‘Alā al-Daula Simnānī (d.1336), Shāh Nī‘matallāh Valī and others.
38. Select poems, among them a *matla‘* by Sā’ib Tabrīzī and poetic replies (*jawāb*) by Ma‘lūm, Bikhud (d. 1787),<sup>68</sup> Yaktā (d. 1734)<sup>69</sup> and Nī‘mat Khān ‘Ālī (d. 1709) (fols 299<sup>v</sup>-300<sup>v</sup>).

63 Gulchīn Ma‘ānī, *Kārvān-i Hind*, Vol. 1, 421-9.

64 Hadi, *Dictionary*, 64.

65 Ibid., 87.

66 Ibid., 288.

67 The critical edition of the Budapest copy of the *Beng ü Bāde* together with its versified Hungarian translation was published in Muhammad Fuzūlī, *A Fű és a Bor vitája* (The Debate of Weed and Wine), ed. Péri Benedek (Budapest: MTA Könyvtár és Információs Központ–Jaffa Kiadó, 2016).

68 Hadi, *Dictionary*, 132.

69 Ibid., 625-6.

39. Contains a short versified lexicographical work titled *Niṣāb-i Turki* by Muḥammad Yādgar. The treatise, written between 1557/8 and 1562/3, was dedicated to Mīrzā ʿĪsā Tarkhān and his son Muḥammad Bāqī Tarkhān (fols 301<sup>r</sup>-309<sup>r</sup>).
40. A versified Turki–Persian vocabulary from Jahāngīr’s (r. 1605-27) reign (fols 309<sup>v</sup>-316<sup>r</sup>).
41. Selected poems in Turki by ʿUbayd Allāh Khān ʿUbaydī (r. 1534-9). This section was completed in Muḥarram 1175 (August 1761) (fols 316<sup>v</sup>-324<sup>v</sup>).
42. Poems in Turki (fols 325<sup>r</sup>-325<sup>v</sup>).
43. Recipes for making paints and dyes (fols 326<sup>r</sup>-326<sup>v</sup>).
44. A short Persian prose text on *ʿilm-i qiyāfa* (fols 327<sup>r</sup>-328<sup>r</sup>).
45. Fol. 328<sup>v</sup> contains select couplets in Persian.
46. Fols 329<sup>r</sup>-330<sup>r</sup> contain various short prose texts in Persian, among them the story of a *fatwā* by Rukn al-Dīn Lahūrī and an anecdote on ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Jāmī.
47. Fols 330<sup>v</sup>-333<sup>r</sup> contain various poetic texts.
48. Fols 354<sup>v</sup>-360 contain select verses and several scribbled notes dated 1909.<sup>70</sup>

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# Index

- Adilshahis 1, 10, 17, 19, 152, 178-80, 188, 190,  
193-6, 271-95  
‘Alī I 278, 282, 292  
‘Alī II 287-8  
Ibrāhīm I 279  
Ibrāhīm II 124, 280, 282-3, 292  
Muḥammad 283-4, 289, 292-5  
Yūsuf 112, 188, 274, 277  
‘Ā’isha 292  
Abbasids 56, 89, 205, 227, 233  
al-Mu‘tašim 89  
‘Abd al-Raḥīm Khān-i Khānān 157, 164, 319,  
371, 376  
Abhira 40  
Abū Bakr 292  
Abū Sa‘īd Mīrzā 130  
Abū Turāb Valī 145, 147  
Abū’l-Faẓl ibn Mubarak 141, 145, 301, 326  
Abū’l-Fidā 356  
Abyssinians 15, 98, 114, 122, 280, 289, 338  
*Acacia planifrons* 42  
*Acacia spirocarpa* 42  
Achaemenids 69  
*Ādāb al-ḥarb wa-l-shujā‘a* 91  
*Adāt al-Fuẓalā* 367  
*Aeterni Regis* 340  
Afanasii, Nikitin 113  
*āfāqīs* 104, 109, 111-24, 275, 279-83, 293  
Afghanistan 58-9, 92, 101, 130, 135-8, 149,  
205, 240, 250  
Afonso V 341  
Afshārids  
Nādir Shāh Afshār 61, 71, 119, 329, 370  
Afrāsiyāb 91  
Āghar Khān 370  
Agra 3, 62, 66-7, 81, 140, 144, 214-5, 301, 310,  
312, 322-3, 326-8  
Taj Mahal 267, 310, 314, 322  
*aḥādīth* 289-92  
*aḥl al-bayt* 292  
Aḥmad ibn ‘Abd al-Šamad 28  
Aḥmad Sulṭān Afshār 138  
Aḥmadnagar 112, 152  
Ahmed Paşa 78, 369  
Ahmedabad 144, 147  
Ajmer 212, 215, 217, 250, 255-6  
Adhai din ka Jhompara mosque 250,  
254-5, 259, 261-2, 267  
*Akhbār al-dawla al-saljūqīyya* 35  
Akhlat 43-5  
Akşehir  
Ferruh Şah mosque 254, 266  
Aleppo 252  
Alexander 71, 99, 350  
‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib 74, 99, 162, 172, 176, 208,  
211, 292, 317  
Ali Macar Reis’s Atlas 351  
‘Alī Yazdī 111  
‘Ali-abad, Balkh 26-7  
Alinjaq 158, 167  
Amasya 178  
Amber 312  
Amīr Khusraw 62, 66, 92-93, 98, 367, 371  
Anahilavada 38  
Anatolian Turkish 122  
Andijan 63  
Ankara 72  
*Ann Royal* 217  
Antalya 76, 253  
Anvarī 61  
Aq Mashhad 135  
Aqqoyunlu 72-6, 105, 117, 132, 152-96, 223,  
274  
Nūr al-Dīn Ḥamza ibn Qara Yüyük  
‘Uthmān 223  
Qara ‘Uthmān 72-4, 166  
Uzun Ḥasan 73, 105, 117, 120, 174, 176-7,  
186, 195  
Ya‘qūb Beg 117, 156, 159, 175, 186-7, 190,  
195  
Arabs 44, 91, 116, 177, 339  
Aral Sea 48  
Ardabil 73  
Arghūns  
Amīr Sulṭān-‘Alī 134  
Shāh Ḥusayn 145  
Zu’l-Nūn 130, 133-4, 145  
*Armazém da Guiné e Índia* 340  
Armenia 43-4

- Armenian Cilicia  
     Hetum I 243-4  
 Armenian 47, 252  
 Artuqid 226, 252  
     Shams al-Dīn al-Şālih 226-7  
 Artze 44  
 Aşaf Jāhis  
     Nizām al-Dawla Nizām al-Mulk Mīr Akbar  
         ‘Alikhān Bahādur 189  
 Āshūr Beg 370  
 Aşık Mehmed 356  
*al-asmā’ al-ḥusnā* 289  
 Aspendos 253  
 Assam 92  
 Astarabad 134-6, 148  
 Atabey  
     Ertokuş tomb and madrasa 253  
 Atatürk, Mustafa Kemal 79  
*Atlas Maior* 357-60  
*Atlas Minor* 357  
 Attaleiates, Michael 46  
 ‘Attār 41  
 Austria 353  
 Awadh 7, 162, 245  
 ‘Awfi, Sadīd al-Dīn Muḥammad 255  
 ‘Azam Khān 215  
 Azerbaijan 57, 69, 73, 105, 134, 153, 158, 177,  
     375  
 Azeri Turkic 18, 73-4, 374-80  
 Azfarī Gurgāni, Mīrzā ‘Alī Bakht 369-71  
  
*Bābur-nāma* 369  
 Bacanor 354  
 Badakhshan 67, 133  
 Badaun 96  
     Jami mosque 11  
 Badī‘ al-Zamān Mīrzā 130, 132-4, 146  
 Badr al-Dīn Ibrāhīm 367  
 Baffin, William 215-22  
 Baghdad 56, 156, 173, 178, 181, 306, 321, 374  
 Bahā’ al-Dīn Tughril 95  
 Baharlū 188-9  
*Bahjat al-Lughat* 369  
 Bahmanis 1, 15, 106-24, 152, 169, 177-8, 231,  
     271, 276, 283, 295  
     Fīrūz Shāh 283  
     Hümāyūn Shāh III 110  
     Muḥammad Shāh 110-1  
  
 Nizām al-Dīn Aḥmad III 110  
 Sultan Aḥmad II 109  
 Sultan Muḥammad Lashkari 188  
 Tāj al-Dīn Fīrūz Shāh 231  
 Bajaur 68  
 Balasagun 251  
 Balchand 215  
 Balkans 8, 50, 79, 106, 120, 322  
 Balkh 26, 92, 132, 136-9, 148, 376  
*banda* see *ghulam*  
*bandagān-i khāṣṣ* 97  
 Baranī, ‘Ziyā’ 62, 93, 100  
 Bar Hebraeus 230  
 Baran 96  
 Barbaro, Giosafat 117  
 Bari 46  
 Baridshahis 178  
     Qāsim Barīd 112  
 Baroch 266  
 Basra 176, 344-5, 348  
 Bassein 146  
 Bayana 142, 144  
     Ukha Mandir mosque 17, 254-7, 260-1,  
         264  
 Bāyazīd (Afghan rebel) 140, 149  
 Bayhaqī 28, 32-5, 40, 62  
 Bayrām Khān 5, 67, 157, 189, 304, 377  
*bazm u razm* 180, 185  
*beḡlik* 72, 76-7  
 Benares 312  
     ‘Ālamgīrī mosque 312  
*Beng ü Bāde* 372, 380  
 Bengal 92, 101, 237-45, 265, 267, 368  
 Berar 112  
 Bhirah 63  
 Biban (Afghan rebel) 140, 149  
 Bidar 109-12, 169, 273, 289-90  
 Bihar 140  
 Bijapur 112, 152, 190, 271-3, 279-83, 289-90,  
     293  
     Asar Mahal 294  
     *Dargāh* of Hashim Pir 294  
     Gol Gumbaz 294  
     Jami mosque of Sultan Ibrāhīm 279  
     Jami mosque 17, 278-295  
     Mecca mosque 285  
 Binban 232

- al-Birūnī, Abū'l-Rayḥān Aḥmad 33, 40, 59, 62, 108
- Bisnagar see Visnagar
- Bistam 135
- Black Sea 76, 345, 347
- Blaeu, Joan 357-60
- British 9, 80-1, 329
- Bryennios, Nikephoros 44, 46
- Buddhist 17
- Bukhara 19, 59, 79, 92, 251, 257, 376  
Maggok-i Attori mosque 251
- Bulgaria 322
- Bundārī 34, 47
- Burgaz, Thrace see Lüleburgaz
- Burhān al-Ma'āshir* 114
- Bursa 64
- Bushehr 116
- Bust 263
- Byzantines 14, 25-6, 69, 78, 205-6, 211, 253, 266, 273  
Doukas, Andronikos 45  
Doukas, Michael VII 46  
Romanos IV Diogenes 43-7, 52
- Cairo 109, 342
- Calicut 354
- Cambay 266
- Cape of Good Hope 338
- Caucasus 18, 25, 44, 117, 154
- Celali revolts 178
- Central Asian Turkic 19
- Ceylon see Sri Lanka
- Chaghatay 14, 78, 121, 368-71, 374-82
- Chaghcharan 138
- Chahamana 89
- Chaldiran 68, 134
- Chandela 89
- Chandella 89
- Chatr* 140
- Chaul 115
- Chaulukya 38, 40-1
- Chaurasi Khamba mosque, Kaman 17, 254, 259-64
- Chausa 148
- Chinese art 215
- Chishti Order 80, 310, 322
- Chunar 140
- Cihannüma* 354-60
- Cilicia 243
- Claesz, Cornelis 353
- Clavijo, Ruy Gonzales de 213-4
- Colier, Justinus 357
- Columbus, Christopher 340
- Constantinople see Istanbul
- Crete 304
- Crimean Turks 76, 178, 300
- Cumans 43
- da Cunha, Nuno 130, 146, 148
- Dabhol 109
- Daftarī, Abū'l-Faẓl Muḥammad 117
- daknīs* 104, 109, 111-24, 156, 275, 279-83, 293
- Damascus 109
- Damavand 115
- Damghan 134
- Dandanqan 13, 25, 31-8, 41, 43, 48
- Dā'ūd, Isma'ili ruler 39
- Davvānī 111
- Daylamites 27
- Delhi 62, 67, 81, 159, 299, 311, 328-9, 354  
Qutb minaret 11, 254-6  
Quwwat al-Islam mosque 250, 254, 267  
Sultan Ghari tomb complex 11, 17, 254, 263-5
- Delhi Sultanate 1, 4, 14-5, 19, 56, 58, 62, 88-101, 123, 152, 310-3, 367
- Ghiyathis 14, 60, 88
- Khaljis 14, 60, 88
- Mamluk  
Qutb al-Dīn Aybak 61, 88, 91, 94-6, 101, 237, 250, 259
- Shamsis 14, 60, 88, 97-101  
Nāṣir al-Dīn Maḥmūd Shāh 97, 99-100, 263  
Rāziyya 97  
Shams al-Dīn Iltutmish 88, 95-6, 99, 232, 238, 241-4, 250, 255, 263
- Tughluqs 14, 60, 88, 312  
Ghiyāṣ al-Dīn 92  
Muḥammad ibn Tughluq 60
- Delvada 38
- Devanagari 237
- el-Dimaṣki, Ebu Bekir ibn Behram 18, 357-63
- dīn-i ilāhī* 9



- Diu 8, 130, 144-8, 344  
 Dīv Sulṭān Rūmlū 136  
*Dīvān-i Bayrām Khān* 67  
*Dīvān-i Fuzūlī* 18, 372-81  
*Dīvān-i Khāqānī* 100  
*Dīvān-i Navā'ī* 64  
*Dīvān-i Sanā'ī* 100  
 Divriği 251, 254  
*Dīvān Luḡhāt al-Turk* 56  
 Diyarbekir 72, 166-7, 174, 181  
 Dutch 341, 357
- East India Company 214, 217, 329  
 Eastern Turk Empire 51  
 Edirne 304-5, 308  
 Egypt 107, 114, 120-1, 154, 156, 158, 166, 273, 316, 341, 344-5, 348  
 Ekmekçizāde Ahmed Paşa 304  
 Elstrack, Reynold 217  
 Eminönü 303  
 Erciş 183  
 Erzurum 17, 181, 251, 256, 261, 316  
     Tepsi minaret 17, 251
- Fakhr-i Mudabbir (Fakhr al-Dīn  
     Mubārakshāh) 60, 64, 66, 71, 74, 91, 94, 98, 100  
*Farhang-i zafāngūyā va jahānpūyā* 367  
 Farīdūn 93, 99  
*Farr* 75, 211  
 Farrukhī 40-1  
 Fars 74, 206  
 Fārūqī, Ibrāhīm Qiwām al-Dīn 368  
*Fatāwā-i 'Ālamgīrī* 9  
 Fatehpur Sikri 310, 313-4  
 Fāṭima 292  
 Fatimids 47  
*fattāk-i atrāk* 116  
 Fayzī 10  
 Fazıl Ahmed Paşa 302  
 Fazıl Mustafa Paşa 362  
 Fazl Allāh Khān 379  
 Ferghana 5, 63, 79  
 Fiḡhānī 78  
*Fiqh-i Firūzshāhī* 100  
 Firdawsī, Abū'l-Qāsim 59, 62, 66, 161  
 Firishta 41, 114, 184, 188-90, 274, 295, 367  
 First World War 81
- Firuzabad 231  
 Fra Mauro 341  
 Franks 43-5  
 Fursī 160-80, 187, 189, 194  
*Fuṣṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* 111  
 Fuzūlī 372-81
- Gahadavala (kingdom) 89  
 Gajapatis 110  
 da Gama, Vasco 118, 340  
 Gandhara 25  
 Ganges 89, 142, 148, 310-1  
 Gardīzī 33, 40  
 Gāwān, Maḥmūd *see* Maḥmūd Gāwān, 'Imād al-Dīn  
 Genoa 317  
 Georgia 112, 224  
 Georgians 43, 123, 165, 169, 176, 181, 230, 252  
 Gharchistan 135-8  
*gharībān* *see* *āfāqīs*  
*ghazal* 78  
 Ghazna 25, 38-9, 56, 59, 61, 232-3, 237, 255  
 Ghaznavids 1, 6, 13, 25-6, 58, 69-71, 89, 99, 204-6, 256, 263, 367  
     Alptegin 59  
     Khusraw Malik 92  
     Maḥmūd 26, 59, 61, 91-2, 204  
     Mas'ūd 26, 43, 52, 69  
     Sebüktegin 58  
 Ghiyāṣ al-Dīn 'Ivaż 238, 241-2  
 Ghiyāṣ al-Dīn Balaban 88, 97, 100, 232  
*Ghulām* 26, 30-2, 56-9, 61-2, 69-70, 75, 79, 93, 136, 188  
 Ghur 93  
 Ghurids 7, 11-2, 17, 60-1, 89, 91-4, 97-8, 101, 204-6, 232, 237-45, 250, 256-68  
     Mu'izz al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Sām 92, 94-5, 101, 237, 259  
 Ghuzz 92, 245 *see also* Oghuz  
 Gilan 15, 105, 109, 115-6  
 Girayid Khan 178  
 Goa 40, 110-1, 115, 117, 354  
 Golconda 112, 152, 157, 160, 168, 195  
 Golden Horde 223  
     Jānī Beg 223  
 Greece 322  
 Greek 26, 58, 75, 83

- Gujarat 18, 25, 38, 42, 49, 105, 110, 116, 122-3, 143, 257, 267, 342, 344-5, 348-50, 354
- Gujarat, Sultanate of 8, 122, 143-9, 266, 348-50
- Muzaffarids 173
- Bahādur 130, 143-8
- Gul 116
- Gulbadan Begam 66, 141
- Gulbarga 231, 273, 289
- Gulshan-i Ibrāhīmī* 188-9
- Gunābādī 161
- Guptas 17, 264
- Gurgan 27, 30
- Gwalior 96, 140, 144
- Habbarids 204
- Ḥabīb al-Sīyar* 135, 157, 159
- Habsburgs 325
- Hadım Süleyman Paşa 342
- Ḥadīqat al-‘Ālam* 189
- Ḥadīqat al-Salāṭīn* 187
- Ḥāfiẓ 74, 78, 83
- Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū 154, 182
- Hamadan 167, 188-9
- Hanafism 9-10, 65-6, 79, 95, 277, 292
- Ḥasan Beg 120
- Ḥasan 292
- Hasankeyf 252
- haṣṣa mi‘mārları* 304
- Hatice Turhan 303, 313
- Hatice 309
- Hātifi 161
- Ḥātīm al-Tāī 99
- Hayreddin Barbarossa 345
- Hazara 232
- Herat 29, 61, 64-5, 82, 111, 113, 122, 133-4, 136, 166, 261
- Jami mosque 264
- al-Hidāya* 79-80
- Hijaz 81, 120, 341-4
- ḥikmat-i ishrāqī* 111
- Hindī, Ṣafi al-Dīn 7
- Hindū Khān 101
- Hindu Shahī 41
- Hiralāl Khūshdil 164-74, 194-5
- Hoca Sa‘deddin 356
- Hondius, Henricus 353
- Hondius, Jodocus Jr. 353
- Hondius, Jodocus 351-3
- Hormuz 116, 338, 344
- Hungary 112, 325, 353
- Hürrem Sultan 303
- Ḥusayn 292
- al-Ḥusaynī 35
- Hyderabad 5, 156, 160, 189-90, 193
- Ibn al-‘Arabī 111, 187
- Ibn al-‘Adīm 47
- Ibn al-Athīr 35, 40
- Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī 114
- Ibn Mājid 343, 345
- Ibn Ma‘rūf, Taqī al-Dīn Muḥammad 80
- Ibrāhīm Jābūq 138
- İbrahim Müteferrika 356-60
- İbrahim Paşa 308, 341-2, 346
- Ibrahim Rauza 287, 290, 294
- Ibrāhīm Sulṭān Mawṣillu 138
- İdrīs Bitlisī 108, 117
- Ikdish* 6
- Ilkhans 71-4, 76, 223-4
- Abu Sa‘īd 223-4
- Arghūn 223-4
- ‘Imād al-Mulk 147-9
- Imadshahis
- Faṭḥ Allāh ‘Imād al-Mulk 112
- imāmbāras* 329-30
- Imperial Atlas* 351
- Indian Turki 5
- Indonesia 357
- Indus Valley 12, 38-9, 265
- al-insān al-kāmil* 188
- iqṭā‘* 93
- Iranian Turkic 18, 368, 374-80
- Iraq 18, 107, 109, 121, 156, 158, 176-7, 205, 225, 317, 348, 377
- Isfahan 30, 75, 81, 209
- al-Isfahānī, ‘Imād al-Dīn al-Kātib 34
- İşfahānī, Mir Shāhmīr 162
- al-İşfahānī, Ṣadr al-Dīn Muḥammad Kātib 162
- Iskandar Beg Munshī 178, 195
- Isparta 253
- Istanbul 3, 7, 43, 65, 80, 120, 134, 274, 301-9, 317-8, 321, 345, 350, 357
- Blue mosque 294
- Fatih 308

- Istanbul (*cont.*)  
 Süleymaniye 308  
 Topkapı Palace 306, 308, 325, 360  
 Üsküdar 305  
 Izmir 304  
 İzniç 327
- Jaimini Bhāratam* 110
- Jainism 17, 40, 250
- Jaipur 80, 313, 327-9
- Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad, father of Maḥmūd  
 Gāwān 109
- Jalayirids 155-96  
 Aḥmad Jalāyir 143, 156  
 Shaykh Uways 158, 165, 173, 181, 182-3  
 Sulṭān-Ḥusayn 158, 183
- Jam 255
- Jamālī 190
- Jāmī 78, 111, 377
- Jāmī' al-Tavārikkh* 34, 181
- Jāmī' al-Barr wa'l-Baḥr* 175
- Jāmī' i Muftīdī* 184
- Japheth 188
- Jats 39-40, 43
- Jaunpur 140-1
- Javāmi' al-Ḥikāyāt* 255
- Jeddah 119
- Jhūjhār Khān Marjān 122
- Jibal 27
- Juvaynī 71, 181
- Jūzjānī, Minhāj Sirāj 90, 93-4, 99-101
- Kā'ūs 99-100
- Kabirwala  
 Ribat of 'Alī ibn Karmakh 262
- Kabul 5, 59, 67, 129, 138-41, 146, 149
- Kachhwahas 312-3, 327-9
- Kadamba 40
- Kadızadelis 304
- kadkhudā* 168
- Kamāl al-Dīn Rūmī 111
- Kankthkot 39
- Kannada 123
- Kanwah 68
- Karamanids 77  
 Turgutoğlu 77
- Karlowitz, Treaty of 351, 356
- Karmash and Bangash mountains 141
- Karnataka 271
- Kārvān-i Hind* 82
- al-Kāshgharī, Maḥmūd 56-7, 61, 71-2
- al-Kāshī 80
- Kashmir 16, 41, 66, 131, 215
- Katib Çelebi 18, 107, 351-63
- Kesh 213
- Khadīja Begam 186
- Khāfi Khān 212
- Khalajis 91-2, 101, 237, 245
- Khalifa Beg 142
- Khaljī, Muḥammad Bakhtiyār 92
- Khaljis of Malwa 110
- Khamsa* of Nizāmī 100
- Khandesh 111
- Khanua 141
- Khatu 17  
 Shahi mosque 254, 258, 262
- Khayyama* 36
- Khazars 61
- khidmat* 131, 136
- khilāfa* 120-1
- Khilafat movement 9, 81
- Khiljī, Ikhtiyār al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn  
 Bakhtiyār 237
- Khokhars 92, 96
- Khulāṣa-i Abbāsī* 175
- Khurasan 13, 27-8, 30, 59, 69-70, 74, 91, 109,  
 134-5, 138-9, 146, 154, 175, 348, 377
- Khūrshāh ibn Qubād al-Ḥusayn 141, 155,  
 157-60, 185-6, 194-5
- Khvāfi, Shaykh Zayn 140
- Khvāja Aḥrār 66, 80
- Khvāja Ḥāfiẓ 146
- khvāja jahān* 110
- Khvāja Kalān Beg 145
- Khvāja Mirjān 181
- Khvādamīr 132-40, 157
- Khvarr* see *Farr*
- Khwarazam 28, 33, 56, 64, 223
- Khwarazmshahs 7, 181, 232  
 Jalāl al-Dīn Mangubarnī 232, 235
- Kirgiz 51
- Kitab-i Bahriye* 338-9, 342-5, 347
- Kitab-i Muhit* 345-50
- Kitāb-i Nauras* 124
- Koh-i Jud mountains 232
- Kök Turks 57
- Konkan 115, 123

- Konversationsbuch* 370  
 Konya 76, 227-8, 253, 256, 264  
     Alaeddin mosque, Konya 253  
 Köprülü family 304, 309  
 Kufic 206, 251, 261  
 Küfi, Fakhr al-Dīn al-'Azīz 95  
 Kuhram 95  
 Kūkī, Bābā Qashqa 141  
 Kurdistan 18  
 Kurds 27, 116, 123  
 Kurraman 232-3  
  
 Lahore 7, 13, 25, 39, 62, 145, 162, 215, 312  
 Lakhnauti 237  
 Lakshmi 204  
 Lārī, Mu'īn al-Dīn Jahānshāh 116  
 Laskarids 253  
 Lodi Afghans 63, 67-8, 139-40, 143  
     Ibrāhīm Lodi 63, 66, 68, 141  
     Maḥmūd Lodi 140  
*Lubb al-Tavārīkh* 158  
 Lucknow 329, 369  
*Lughat-i Turki* 379  
 Lüleburgaz, Thrace 321  
 Luṭfī 368  
  
*Ma'āshir-i Qutbshāhī-i Maḥmūdī* 155, 185, 195  
*Ma'āshir-i Raḥīmī* 371  
 Madhya Pradesh 38  
 Mahdī Khvāja 137, 142  
 Maḥmūd Gāwān, 'Imād al-Dīn 15, 104-24  
 al-Mahrī, Sulaymān 344-5  
*majlis* 27, 328  
 Makran 26  
 Malabar 344  
 Malay 4, 121  
 Malik Ambar 122, 300  
 Malik Bahā' al-Dīn Ṭughrl 259-60  
 Malik 'Izz al-Dīn Kabīr Khān Ayaz 97  
 Malik Qāsīm 141-2  
 Malik Santal (Sandal) 294  
 Malwa 38, 40-2, 144  
*mamlūk* see *ghulam*  
 Mamluks 77, 94, 99, 119, 156, 316  
*Manāẓir al-Inshā'* 107  
 Mandsaur 144  
 Mandu 145  
 Mangrol 146, 266  
  
 Manisa 308  
 Mansura 39  
 Manzikert 14, 25, 41-3, 43, 69  
 Marathas 312  
 Marathi 123  
 Mardin, 223, 226, 252  
 al-Marghīnānī, Burhān al-Dīn 'Alī Qılıj 79  
*Marghūb al-Qulūb* 186-7  
 Mashhadī, Qanbar 'Alī 177  
 Mas'ūd Sa'd Salmān 62  
 Masulipatnam 111  
 Ma'sūma Begum 139  
*Maṭla'-i Sa'dayn* 186  
 Matrakçı Nasuh 317  
 Mawarannahr see Transoxiana  
 Mayyafariqin 183  
 Mazandaran 115  
 Māzandarānī, Ashraf 82  
 Mecca 109, 114, 118  
 Mediterranean Sea 18, 50, 123, 317, 340-50  
 Meerut 95  
 Mehmed İhlas 351  
 Melaka 357  
 Melling, Antoine Ignace 309  
 Mengüjekids  
     Dāwūd 11 ibn Bahrām Shāh 254  
     Sayf al-Dīn Shāhanshāh 251  
 Mercator, Gerardus 351-4  
 Merv 29-31, 48, 92, 263  
     Sultan Sanjar's tomb 263  
 Mevlevism 7  
 Mewar 215  
 Mēxihcah 123  
*mihrāb* 17, 206, 249-50, 258-61, 264-6, 278-95  
 Mihrişah Emine Sultan 305  
 Mimar Sinan 314  
 Mīr 'Ālam 189  
 Mīr 'Alī Shakar 188-9  
 Mīr Ḥusam al-Dīn Mīrak 146  
 Mīr Sa'd Allāh 19  
*Mīr'atū'l-Memalik* 347-50  
 Mīrkhvand 154, 157  
 Mīrzā Mahdī Khān 369  
 Mīrzā Qiyām 137  
*Mīrzā* 19, 64, 133, 380  
*Mīrzā-nāma* 370  
*Mīzān-i Turki* 371  
 Moldavia 300

- Mongols 3, 7, 56, 65, 69, 71, 76-7, 92, 105, 133, 165, 169, 181, 184, 214, 232-3, 235, 243  
 Chinggis Khan 65, 72, 181  
 Hülegü, Mongols 243
- Mosul 183
- Mu'izz al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Sām 60-1, 204
- Mubīn* 79
- Mudhera 38
- Mughals 1, 8-9, 16-7, 65-9, 79-83, 107, 123, 129, 195, 211-23, 231, 267, 282, 292, 299-331, 368-71  
 Akbar 9, 149, 161, 212, 283, 301, 310-2, 318, 322, 325-6, 330  
 'Askarī ibn Bābur 139-40  
 Aurangzeb 9, 67, 108, 156, 277, 303, 310, 312, 328, 372  
 Bābur, Zāhir al-Dīn Muḥammad 5, 16, 63-4, 79, 81-2, 129-30, 137-42, 310, 328, 369  
 Hindal ibn Bābur 139  
 Humāyūn ibn Bābur 67, 82, 141-9, 159, 310-1, 369  
 Jahāngīr (Salīm) 16, 178, 211-22, 231, 300, 310-2, 318, 320, 325, 330, 369, 379  
 Kāmran ibn Bābur 139, 145, 369  
 Khurram 215  
 Muḥammad Shāh 371  
 Shāh Jahān 119, 188, 214, 301, 310-2, 320, 325, 330
- Muḥākamāt al-Lughatayn* 64
- Muḥammad Baharlū 136
- Muḥammad Ḥaydar Dughlāt 16, 130, 141
- Muḥammad ibn 'Abdullāh, Prophet 172, 187, 206-7, 211, 289-92, 304, 316
- Muḥammad Sultan Mirzā 141
- Muḥammad Taqī Beg 371
- Muḥammad Yādgār 377-8
- Muḥammad Zamān Mirzā 15-6, 130-49
- Mullā Du Piyāza 373
- Multan 38-9, 100, 204, 232
- Mundy, Peter 214-5
- Muntakhab-i Dīvān-i Turki-yi 'Ubaydī* 376
- Murghab 31
- Muş 183
- Muscat 345
- Muṣṭafā 'Alī 65, 107
- Mustafa Darir 316-7
- Muṣṭafā ibn Bayrām (Behnām) 105, 123  
*musta'kila* 27
- Mustawfī, Ḥamdallāh 356
- Mysore 9
- Nagari 233
- Naima 82
- Nakhchivan 158, 255  
 Momine Hatun tomb 255
- Nányuè (Vietnam) 123
- Naqshbandi Order 66, 80, 322
- Nasa 28
- Nasabnāma-i Shahrīyārī* 155, 160-70, 183, 186-7, 194-5
- Nāṣir al-Dīn Qabācha 95, 232
- Navā'ī, Mir 'Alī Shīr 63, 72, 78, 368-70, 374
- Nawruz 29, 75
- Necati 78
- Negüdaris 136
- Nevşehir 306
- Nevşehirli Damad İbrahim Paşa 305-6
- Nihāvandī, 'Abd al-Bāqī 371, 376
- Nishapur 28-9, 69-70, 92, 95  
 Shadyakh 29
- Nīshāpūrī, Maḥmūd ibn 'Abdallāh 155, 175-87, 194-5
- Nīshāpūrī, Zāhir Al-Dīn 34
- Nizām al-Dīn 'Alī Barlas 146
- Nizām al-dīn Awliyā 311
- Nizām al-Mulk 70-2, 76, 92
- Nizāmī 7-9, 66, 161
- Nizamshahis 152, 157, 178  
 Malik Aḥmad Bahārī 112
- Noah 188
- Normans 43, 46, 50
- Nudiya 237
- Nuh Sipīhr* 367
- nūr-i Muḥammadī (nūr al-anwār)* 187, 211
- Nūrjahān 222
- Nusretü'l-İslam ve's-Surur fī Takrir-i Atlas Mayur* 357
- Oghuz Khan 78, 164, 181, 188
- Oghuz 43-5, 56-7, 61, 69-78, 83, 177, 237, 245
- Okha 146
- Old Russian 113
- Orissa 110-1, 114

- Ottomans 3, 7-10, 15, 17-8, 66, 77-83, 106, 110, 112, 116-21, 143, 152, 177-8, 193, 211, 274-7, 299-331, 338-63, 374  
 Ahmed I 304, 315, 320, 326  
 Ahmed II 304  
 Ahmed III 305, 324  
 Bayezid I 72, 143  
 Bayezid II 7, 342, 369  
 İbrahim 304  
 Mehmed II Fâtih 105, 120, 188, 274, 330  
 Mehmed IV 303-5  
 Murad II 73, 188, 274  
 Murad III 315-6, 325, 330  
 Mustafa II 304-5  
 Mustafa III 305  
 Osman I 78  
 Osman II 315, 330  
 Selim I 341-4  
 Selim II 314  
 Süleymân I 303, 314-7, 323, 330, 341, 345-6, 349-50  
 Süleyman II 304  
 Ottoman Turkish 14, 18, 66, 108, 323, 330, 359-60, 368, 374-80
- Pādshāh-i Irān* 74  
*Pādshāhnāma* 214-21  
 Paharis 329  
 Pahlavis 16, 208  
 Pakistan 232, 262, 312  
 Palas 49, 354  
 Panipat 68, 139, 141  
 Paramaras 40, 89  
 Parihar 89  
 Pashupata Shaivism 40, 49  
 Patañjali 108  
 Payag 215  
 Pechengs 43, 46, 50  
 Penukonda 110  
 Persian Intermezzo 59  
*Phalanga* 45  
 Piri Reis 18, 317, 338-9, 342, 356, 363  
*pīshṭāq* 222  
 Poland 353  
 Portuguese 8, 18, 81, 104, 112, 118, 130, 143-9, 282, 317, 338-63  
 Pratiharas 49  
 Psellos, Michael 46
- Punjab 17, 62-3, 92, 95-6, 232-3, 235, 262, 329  
 Punjabi Khattris 82  
 Punjabi Shaivites 38  
 Pushtu 67
- Qābūs-nāma* 57  
 Qajars 16, 71, 75, 208-9, 369  
 Faṭḥ 'Alī Qājār Shāh 209  
 Qandahar, Afghanistan 133-4, 138, 145, 149  
 Qandahar, Maharashtra 215  
 Qanjis 138  
 Qannauj 141-2  
 Qara Khitai 56  
 Qarakhanids 17, 42, 56, 90, 251, 257  
 Qaraqoyunlu 16, 67, 72, 105, 112, 153-96  
 Alvand ibn Iskandar 166-8, 174, 180  
 Bayrām-Khivāja 155, 181-2  
 Ḥasan-'Alī ibn Jahānshāh 158, 175, 186  
 Iskandar ibn Qarā-Yūsuf 156, 158, 166, 174, 176-7, 180, 186, 194  
 Jahānshāh ibn Qarā-Yūsuf 72, 156, 158, 167-8, 174, 176, 180, 185-9, 194  
 Pīr Budāq ibn Jahānshāh 158, 175, 185-6  
 Pīr Budāq ibn Qarā-Yūsuf 156-158, 169  
 Pīr-Qulī ibn Alvand 168, 174, 186  
 Qarā-Muḥammad 155-183, 190  
 Qarā-Yūsuf 143, 155-183  
 Qubād ibn Iskandar 167  
 Shāh Muḥammad ibn Qarā-Yūsuf 158  
 Sulṭān-Qulī ibn Uways-Qulī Quṭb al-Mulk 112, 156, 159, 162, 177-80, 186-8, 190  
 Uways-Qulī ibn Alvand 168, 174, 186  
 Yūsuf ibn Jahānshāh 186, 189
- Qarluqs 232-7  
 Nāsir al-Dīn Muḥammad 232-7  
 Sayf al-Dīn Ḥasan 232-3, 235
- qaṣīda* 78  
*Qazaqlıq* 148  
 Qāzī Khān Badr Muḥammad Dihlavī 367  
 Qazvīnī, Faṭḥ 'Alī Qājār 369  
 Qazvīnī, Zayn al-Dīn 182  
 Qipchaqs 95-6, 100  
 Ölberli (Ölperli) 95, 100  
 Qiyām Beg 137  
 Qizilbash 57, 61, 66, 75, 83  
 Afshar 61, 71, 74, 77  
 Qunduz 132-3

- Qushjī, 'Alī 359  
 Qutbshahis 1, 4, 16, 19, 152-96  
     Haydar ibn Muḥammad-Qulī 170-1  
     Ibrāhīm 156-7, 160, 172, 179  
     Jamshīd ibn Sulṭān-Qulī 172  
     Muḥammad-Qulī Quṭbshāh 156, 160,  
         168, 170-2, 179, 187, 194-5  
     Sulṭān-Muḥammad 156, 170-1, 175, 179,  
         184-5, 190, 194-5  
     Sulṭān-Qulī ibn Uways-Qulī Quṭb  
         al-Mulk see Qaraqoyunlu  
  
 Rabia Gülnuş Emetullah 305  
 Rae of Kamrud 92  
*Rāḥat al-Sudūr* 34  
 Raja of Abu 39  
 Rajasthan 38, 48-9, 61, 123, 312  
     Thar desert 38, 48-9  
 Rajputs 68, 80, 212, 312, 329  
     Jai Sing II 80  
 Rāmdās 322-3  
 Ramgarh see Kuhram  
 Rana Sangha 141  
 Rann of Kutch 39, 49  
 Rashīd al-Dīn 34, 71, 181  
 Rashtrakutas 49  
 Ratnagarh see Sangisar  
 Rāvandī 34  
*Rawzat al-Şafā* 157  
 Ray 27, 30, 134  
 al-Razavī, Mīr Abū Turāb ibn Sayyid  
     Aḥmad 189  
 Rāzī, Amīn Aḥmad 356  
 Red Sea 341, 344-5, 348  
 Rhodes 345  
 Ridaniyya 120  
*Riyāz al-Inshā'* 107-8, 115, 120  
 Roe, Sir Thomas 217-21  
 Roger II of Antioch 240  
 Roussel de Bailleul 45  
 Rukn al-Dīn 'Alī Mardān 238, 242  
 Rumelia 306  
 Rūmī, Aḥmad-i 7  
 el-Rumi, Kadızade 80  
 Rūmī, Khalīl al-Dīn 111  
 Rūmī Khān 144  
 Rūmī, Jalāl al-Dīn 7, 66 76-7, 111, 377  
 Rūmī, Muştafā 68-9  
  
 Rus 92  
 Rüstem Pasha 345-7  
  
 Sa'dabad 167, 174  
*sabk-i hindī* 78  
 Sa'dī 41, 74, 78, 100  
 Safavids 3, 9-10, 16-8, 57, 61, 72-4, 79-83, 112,  
     130, 135-6, 128, 175-8, 184, 194-5, 209-11,  
     222-3, 273, 277, 282, 317, 325, 342, 350,  
     369, 374  
     'Abbās 75, 172, 175, 177-8, 180, 321  
     Ismā'il ibn Ḥaydar 73-4, 134, 136, 178, 195  
     Ḥaydar ibn Junayd 73, 195  
     Husayn I 209  
     Junayd 73, 176, 195  
     Shaykh Safi 176  
     Ṭahmāsp 75, 157, 160, 176, 326  
 Şafavī, Sām Mirzā 145  
 Sa'īdī Shirāzī, Nizām al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn  
     'Abdallāh 187  
 al-Şaghānī 7  
 al-Sakhāwī 114  
 Sālārī, Malik 'Izz al-Dīn Muḥammad 97  
*şalawāt* 289  
*Şaljūqnāma* 34  
 Samanids 59, 69, 79, 90, 99  
 Samarqand 65, 80, 83, 90, 92, 177, 214, 222  
     Sher Dor madrasa 222  
 Samarqandī, 'Abd al-Razzāq 113, 186  
 Sanā'ī Ghaznawī 62  
 Şanā'ī, Khvāja Ḥusayn 161-2, 164  
 Sangisar 115  
*Sanglakh* 369  
 Sanskrit 1, 27, 40, 110, 123, 204  
 Saragossa, Treaty of 340  
 Sarakhs 29, 34, 48  
 Sasanians 61, 70, 75, 99, 205-6  
 Saurashtra 38, 42  
 Sayyid 62  
 Seleucid 226  
 Seljuqs 6, 13-5, 25, 43-8, 58, 69-79, 90, 100,  
     252-4  
     'Alā' al-Dīn Kayqubād I 76, 100, 227, 243,  
         253  
     'Alā' al-Dīn Kayqubād III 227  
     Alp Arslan 43-7, 70  
     Chaghri 27  
     Coinage 71, 226-30, 233-7

- Ghiyās al-Dīn Kaykhusraw I 100, 241  
 Ghiyās al-Dīn Kaykhusraw II 227, 233, 235-6, 243  
 'Izz al-Dīn Kaykā'ūs I 76, 243, 253  
 'Izz al-Dīn Kaykā'ūs II 243  
 'Izz al-Dīn Qilij Arslān II 240-1  
 Malikshāh 70, 76  
 Mas'ūd 76  
 Musā Yabghū 27  
 Qilij Arslān II 76  
 Rukn al-Dīn Qilij Arslān IV 243-4  
 Rukn al-Dīn Sulaymān II 241-3  
 Sulaymān 76  
 Ṭughrl I 27, 70  
 Ṭughrl III 34  
 Selman Reis 105, 122  
 Senas 237  
 Serbia 321  
 Seydi Ali Reis 8, 18, 345-50, 362, 369  
 Şeyhülislam Feyzullah 305  
 Shāh Mīr Ḥusayn 137  
 Shāh Muḥammad Sayf al-Mulūk 138  
 Shāh Ni'matallāh of Kirman 109, 168-9, 174, 178, 194  
 Shāhjahanābād see Delhi  
*Shāhnāma* 59, 74, 100, 152, 211, 330  
   Bahman 152  
   Bahrām 99  
   Gayumart 100  
   Kaykhusraw 100  
   Qubād 99-100  
   Rustam 94  
*Shajara-yi ansāb* 98  
 Shansabanis 93  
 Sharada 233-5  
*Sharaf-nāma-yi Muryarī* 368  
 Shattari Sufism 281  
*Shawākil al-ḥūr fi sharḥ Hayākil al-nūr* 111  
 Shaybanids see Uzbeks  
 Shaykh Salim 310, 322  
 Sheberghan 136-7  
 Sher Khān Sur (Afghan rebel) 148-9  
 Shiraz 78, 83  
 Shirāzī, Jamāl al-Dīn Maḥmūd 157  
 Shirāzī, Rafī' al-Dīn 274, 295  
 Shul 116  
 Sialkot 92  
 Śibghat Allāh 281  
 Siddhpur  
   Rudra-Mahalaya Shiva temple 258  
 Sidi 'Ali Reis see Seydi Ali Reis  
 Sindh 11, 39, 42, 130, 133-4, 145, 148, 233, 245, 263  
   Aror tomb 263  
 Sindhi 7  
 Sindh, Sultanate of  
   Tarkhāns  
     Mīrzā 'Īsā Tarkhān 377  
     Muḥammad Bāqī Tarkhān 377  
 Singapore 357  
 Sinjar 183  
 Sirhindī, Shaykh Aḥmad 80  
 Sistan 134, 206  
 Śiva 109  
 Sivas 43, 227-9, 243, 253, 256, 261, 264, 266  
   'Izz al-Dīn Kaykā'ūs hospital 266  
*Siyāsat-nāma* 70, 92  
 Skylitzes 46  
 Slavs 43  
 Soghdia 56  
 Soghdian 58  
 Sokollu Mehmed Paşa 321  
 Somnath 13, 25, 38-43, 48-, 61  
 Spanish 317, 340-1  
 Spices 9, 42, 317, 341  
 Sri Lanka 346, 357  
 Suez 344-5  
 Şūfī Khalil 167  
 Sufism 7, 71, 73, 79, 168, 190, 281, 322  
*al-sultān al-mu'azzam* 70  
 Sultān-Qulī Khān 133  
 Sumatra 357  
 Surat 217, 345, 348, 350  
 Suvendharay 41  
 Syria 44, 154, 158, 205, 225, 251, 260, 273  
 Syriac 47  
  
*Ṭabaqāt-i Nāşirī* 90  
 Tabaristan 115  
 Ṭabāṭabā 114  
 Tabriz 72-4, 158-9, 165-6, 174, 182  
 Tabrizī, 'Abd Ja'far Ja'farī 190  
 Taghāy, Niẓām al-Dīn Shaykh 'Alī 132  
 Ṭaghay, Yādgar Beg 'Alī 142-3  
 Tahamtan Beg 132  
*Tāj al-Ma'āsir* 7, 108



- Tajikistan 92  
 Tamar 230  
*tamgha* 11  
*Tārīkh-i ‘Ālam-ārā-yi ‘Abbāsī* 178  
*Tārīkh-i Fakhr al-Dīn Mubārakshāh* 60  
*Tārīkh-i Īlchī (Tārīkh-i Quṭbī)* 155, 159-60, 185, 195  
*Tārīkh-i Jahangushā* 181  
*Tārīkh-i Quṭbshāhī-yi Maḥmūdī* 175  
*Tārīkh-i Sulṭān-Muḥammad (Tārīkh-i Quṭbshāhī)* 154, 164, 169, 183-7, 189, 195  
*Tārīkh-i Turkmāniyya* 155, 164, 179-84, 195, 225  
 Tejen 31  
 Telangana 177, 179  
 Telugu 110  
 Thailand 357  
 Thanesar 42  
 Thatta 130  
 Theodosiopolis 44  
 Tilak 41  
 Timurids 2, 18, 72, 79-83, 111, 113, 121, 129-38, 143, 149, 222-3, 267, 273, 369-71  
     Husayn Bāyqarā 64-5, 74, 130, 132-3, 136, 141  
     Shāhrukh 65, 156, 158, 166, 169  
     Temūr 1, 62-3, 134, 143, 156, 158, 166, 169, 173, 186, 213-4, 328  
     Ulugh Beg 65, 80  
     ‘Umar Shaykh Mīrzā 65-6, 80  
 Tīpū Sulṭān 9, 118  
 Tōdar Mal 312  
 Toghuz see Oghuz  
 Tokat 178  
 Tordesillas, Treaty of 340  
 Töre Beg 184-5  
 Trachaniotes, Ioseph 44-5  
 Transoxiana 56-7, 61, 68, 79, 134, 137, 146, 348, 377  
 Tungabhadra 111  
 Tunisia 285  
 Turan 67  
 Turkestan 95-6  
 Turkmen 16, 27, 70, 72, 116, 152-96  
 Turkmenistan 25  
*Turushka* 60  
 Tus 223  
 al-Ṭūsī, Naṣīr al-Dīn 359  
 Uccch 101  
 ‘*ulamā*’ 80, 281, 293  
 Ulugh Mīrzā ibn Muḥammad 141  
 Ulughkhānī 114  
*Ulus* 64, 135, 158  
 ‘Umar 292  
 Umayyads 205  
     ‘Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān 205, 207  
 Una 38  
 Urdū Shāh 135-6, 148  
 Urdu 108, 115, 123, 156, 289  
 Ustād ‘Alī Qulī 68-9  
 Ustād Maṣṣūr 319  
 ‘Uthmān 292  
 Uyghur empire 51  
 Uzbek 66  
 Uzbekistan 92, 223  
 Uzbeks 133, 136-9, 175, 178, 181  
     Qarā Khān 139  
     Shaybānī Khān 74, 133-5  
     ‘Ubayd Allāh Khān 18-9, 376-7  
 Uzgend 251  
  
*vaḳf-nāme* 301, 321  
*Vakil al-Salṭānat* 67, 110, 142  
 Van, Lake 155  
*Varāha Purāṇam* 110  
 Varanasi see Benares  
 Venice 317  
 Veraval 38, 42, 49  
 Vienna 7, 351, 362  
 Vietnam see Nányuè  
 Vijayanagara 110, 113, 116, 283  
 Visnagar 354  
  
 Wallachia 300  
*Walters Sea Atlas* 350  
 Wine 28-9, 42, 375  
  
 Xinjiang 65, 78  
  
 Yalangtūsh Bahādur 222  
 Yamuna see Ganges  
 Yaqt Dabuli 289  
*Yasa*, Mongol law 72  
*Yasak*, Oghuz law 72  
 Yazd 168, 175, 178, 256  
 Yazdī, Sharaf al-Dīn 173  
 Yemen 42, 123

Yeni Cami 303  
*Yoga Sūtra* 108  
 Young Turks 79  
 Yūnus 'Alī 140  
 Yūsuf 'Adil Turk 110  
  
*Zā'icha-i Ṭālī'* 190

*Zafarnāma* 173, 180  
 Ziyarids  
     Kaykā'ūs 57  
 Zonaras 46  
 Zoroastrianism 75, 206-7  
 Zuhūrī 164  
 Zulfiqar 208